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on a healthy start
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WHERE
TO FIND
THE
BEST
SALES

Women taken to 'scene of the crime'

Nurses could
face public
execution

BY BILL FROST, JOANNA BALE AND MICHAEL BINYON

TWO British nurses arrested after the murder of an Australian colleague at a Saudi hospital were taken back to the scene of the crime by military police yesterday. If convicted, they could be publicly beheaded, although the chance of a Westerner being executed is slight.

One of the women was last night identified by sources at the King Fahd Medical Complex in Dhahran as Deborah Perry. She is thought to be 36 and to have family in the Midlands.

The other nurse, also single and in her 30s, was named by the same sources as Lucy or Lucille McLaughlin from Scotland. Both are thought to have begun working at the hospital four months ago.

Saudi police were reported to have taken both women from their cells to the 'scene of the crime yesterday' as part of the investigation. Fellow hospital staff were said to be 'in a mood of complete and utter disbelief' at the murder.

So far, the pair have been denied contact with British diplomats. Last night a senior Foreign Office official in London telephoned his opposite number at the Saudi Embassy asking for 'immediate consular access'.

Human rights organisations expressed concern over the women's treatment. Amnesty International said 'torture is frequently used by the Saudi authorities to extract confessions and the nurses might face months on remand before coming to trial'.

Under sharia - strict Islamic law - the women could face execution by beheading if convicted. Clemency is in the hands of the bereaved family: a murderer is spared only when they indicate a willingness to forgive, usually after the payment of compensation. Saudi law does not, in



Yvonne Gilford: 'one of the last Nightingales'

theory, distinguish between Saudis and foreigners. Muslims and Christians. Drug dealers, murderers, rapists, child molesters and terrorists are publicly beheaded. However, although dozens of Asians and Africans working in Saudi Arabia have been executed for murder, sex and drug crimes, so far capital punishment has not been enforced on any European.

Executions are normally carried out immediately after Friday prayers in the courtyard of a mosque. The accused is dressed in white and generally heavily sedated.

The British women, arrested in Dhahran on Friday, are being questioned about the murder of Yvonne Gilford, a 55-year-old Australian. The senior theatre nurse was described by colleagues as 'one of the last of the Florence Nightingales'.

All three worked at the King Fahd Military Medical Complex in Dhahran. Miss Gilford's body was found in her room on December 11. She had been stabbed four times, battered with a hammer and smothered. The murdered woman's brother said last night that he was surprised when he heard two British nurses were being questioned.

Frank Gilford, from Jamestown, South Australia, added: 'It does seem odd.' He was confident the Saudi authorities would conduct the murder inquiry fairly, and added: 'I am hoping Yvonne's body will be returned soon so that we can arrange a funeral,' he said. 'She was a caring person. She loved her new job.'

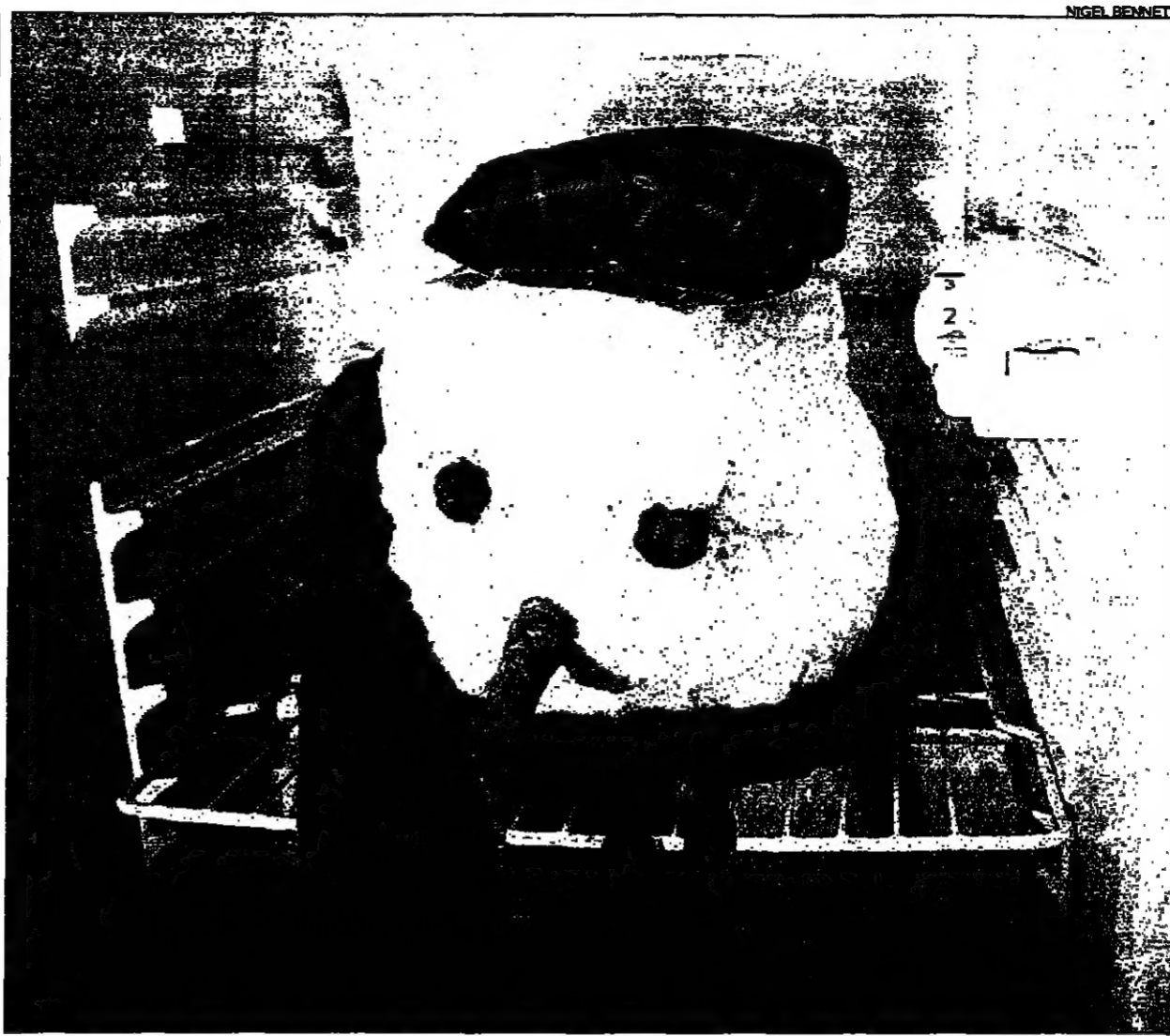
Miss Gilford went to Saudi six months ago from South Africa because she thought it a safer country. Gay Wiggill, a Johannesburg colleague, said: 'She lived for nursing. She was one of the last of the Florence Nightingales.'

The two British women were arrested as Saudi police questioned staff. An unconfirmed report said they had 'confessed'. Both were recruited by a London-based nursing agency, Arabian Careers. The company has an exclusive contract to recruit staff for three Dhahran hospitals.

Eleanor Field, its managing director, said she had been told by the King Fahd hospital that the women had 'been accused of Miss Gilford's murder'. Mrs Field said: 'This is very worrying for all of us. I feel very sorry for the families. My heart goes out to all of them, including the family of the dead woman.'

Female staff at the hospital last night demanded better security, including closed-circuit television monitors. Two years ago a Filipino nurse was stabbed to death there.

After Miss Gilford's murder, all 1,600 staff at the base were refused permission to leave and foreign nationals had their passports confiscated. Some 40 British staff at the hospital were told they could not go home for Christmas. In Riyadh a Sudanese man who stabbed a Saudi national to death after a brawl was beheaded in public yesterday, state-run television revealed.



Cold comfort: Frostie prepares for his outing after spending the year in top form in the family freezer

Frostie the snowman keeps his cool

BY LIN JENKINS

A DOTING couple have ensured that their two sons will have a white Christmas by keeping Frostie the snowman in the freezer all year.

Luke Muren, six, and his two-year-old brother Jacob, built their first snowman in last January's blizzards. But their excitement dissolved as he began to melt.

Their father Tim, 25, a civil engineer, decided to avoid the tears by removing Frostie's head and putting it in the family freezer.

Luke and Jacob have kept an eye on it throughout the year by occasionally checking on the carrot nose and coal eyes. They have even periodically dressed it up in its red scarf and checked cap. Another freezer was installed in the cellar to store food as Frostie's head occupied the one in the kitchen.

The boys failed to notice when their mother Laura, 25,



Jacob Muren, left, with his brother Luke



sent Frostie to neighbours when the freezer needed defrosting. Nor did they notice him shrink as pieces were chipped off to remove fishfinger crumbs or mould his form to fit the available space.

The family, from Keighley, Yorks, built a new, smaller, body when a dusting of snow fell earlier this winter.

Mrs Muren said: 'Every-

body thinks we are barmy. It has been a close-kept secret with only our few friends who have had to have him for a while knowing anything about it. We have had a bit of snow this winter and they asked if they could have Frostie. We were able to scrap together just enough for a body so he had an outing.'

However, the demands on the family's two freezers have

proved so heavy over the festive season that Frostie's head, weighing 6lb, has been dispatched to the yard. He is not yet melting, since temperatures are low, but he has suffered the ignominy of Raymond the rabbit eating his nose.

Christmas Day for Frostie will be dry, bright and largely snowless, according to the London Weather Centre. Only Scotland and parts of the east coast of England can expect a light coating of snow. Temperatures will mainly hover around 3C, but strong winds are expected. Today will be mainly dry with sunny spells.

Forecast, page 20

Ted Leadbitter
dies at 77

Ted Leadbitter, the former Labour MP for The Hartlepool who exposed the traitor Sir Anthony Blunt, has died in hospital after a road accident.

He was 77 and had retired from Parliament at the last general election after 28 years.

The Times

The Times, in common with other national newspapers, will not be published on Christmas Day. It will appear again on Boxing Day.

Buying The Times overseas
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South Africa R150.00
USA \$15.00
West Indies \$15.00
Worldwide £10.00

The Times on the Internet
http://www.the-times.co.uk

TV & RADIO 38, 39
WEATHER 20
CROSSWORDS 20, 40

Europe cuts
cost of love

The cost of a true lover's Christmas has been dramatically reduced by shopping in Europe for this year's Times costing of the gifts listed in the traditional song The Twelve Days of Christmas.

Report, page 6

God with us

'At Bethlehem God is with us in weakness as a newborn child. He is the crucified Lord who knows the agony of a Dunblane or a Rwanda from the inside... He is now and always the God who is with us.'

Leading article, page 15

Fears rise for missing girl

By Ian Key and Lin Jenkins
LATE-NIGHT Christmas shoppers and vagrants were being questioned last night by police hunting for a nine-year-old girl, missing since Thursday.

More than 70 officers showed a photograph of Kayleigh Ward to people on the streets in Chester in the hope that they might have seen the girl.

Detectives believe that Kayleigh, who went missing as she walked to buy chips from a shop after attending a school disco, might have tried to make her way back to the area of Chester where she used to live or go to the city centre where she often went while playing truant from school. She was known often



Kayleigh: streetwise

to speak to vagrants and others on the street. Fears are growing that she might have come to harm. Two men had recently approached a number of children trying to entice

them into their car. Kayleigh has been missing since a few hours after she was seen by her aunt, Beverly Ward. One child claims to have seen her on a bus going to the city centre on Friday.

Detective Superintendent David Jones, leading the search, said: 'As time goes by I am becoming more and more concerned. The fact that she is streetwise can be as dangerous as it is helpful.'

Kayleigh's mother, Yvonne Ward, 36, who has two other children, moved from the outskirts of the town in October. Beverly Ward issued an appeal on behalf of the family: 'We just want her back. My message to Kayleigh is 'Please, come home and give us back our Christmas.'

Hostages tell
of joy at
their release

Lima: Two Britons freed by Peruvian terrorists after six days' captivity said they were 'hugely relieved' but called on their captors to free the 140 men still held at gunpoint (Gabriella Gammie writes).

'I am so glad to be out and will be with my family for Christmas. But we cannot forget those who are still captive,' said Roger Church, a senior diplomat.

Mr Church and David Griffiths, manager of a luxury hotel in Lima, were among 225 hostages released early yesterday in what the rebels called a 'Christmas gesture'.

Hostages freed, page 7

Mountain-top meditator turns unwanted rescuers away

BY ALAN HAMILTON

A BUDDHIST seeking to celebrate the winter solstice on top of a Welsh mountain thought he had found the required peace and contentment - until it was shattered by the arrival of an RAF helicopter and a mountain rescue team bent on saving his life.

The solitary meditator, surprised by the intrusion and alarmed that he had caused an unnecessary incident, politely informed the eight members of the

South Snowdonia mountain rescue team who had interrupted their Christmas party to find him that he was safe and well, and wished only to be left alone. The rescuers retreated, leaving him extra food and hot drinks, and making him promise to report to the police when his contemplation was over.

He had chosen one of the coldest nights of the year on Cader Idris near Dolgellau for his vigil. The air was crisp and clear, but winds approaching

60mph created a potentially fatal chill factor, and made flying difficult for the helicopter from RAF Valley on Anglesey which had been scrambled to help find the man, after other walkers had reported seeing a lone climber apparently with a head injury.

Barry Ellis, leader of the mountain rescue team, said yesterday that the man, believed to be a 50-year-old from Milton Keynes, had been clothed in adequate mountaineering gear and wrapped in a sheepskin when he was

found. 'He had a slight head cut from falling on ice but it was not serious. He told us he was a Buddhist and he wanted to contemplate for the night. He was very concerned that he had caused a problem and put us to trouble.'

Satisfied that the Buddhist was safe, the rescuers gave him extra food and a flask, then left. Last night they reported that he had descended safely.

Leading article, page 15

Road rage
girlfriend
goes home
to her
daughter

BY DANIEL MCGORRY

TREMBLING and looking pale, Tracie Andrews, charged with the murder of Lee Harvey, her fiancé, who, she claims, was the victim of a road-rage incident, returned to her mother's home last night. She had earlier been freed on bail to spend Christmas with Karla, six, her daughter.

She refused to comment on her three days in a Gloucester prison, but John Andrews, 53, her father, said: 'As you can appreciate, we have only just arrived home, but we are all elated. It's the best Christmas present we could have. Tracie is still spaced out and can't take it all in. She just wants to rest.'

Freeing Miss Andrews, a judge at Oxford Crown Court dismissed police fears that Miss Andrews, 27, a former model, might attempt suicide. A condition of her bail is that she stay with her mother, Irene, and Alan Carter, her stepfather, until she appears in court again in February. Their house is on the same estate in Alvechurch, Hereford and Worcester, as the maisonette she shared with her fiancé.

After she arrived home, Mr Carter said: 'Obviously this is a very emotional time for us, all and we would appreciate a bit of peace and quiet together. We are all very happy that she's home.'

In a 75-minute hearing in chambers, Judge Peter Crawford, QC, granted a defence appeal that magistrates at Redditch had been right to grant her bail last week. The prosecution had succeeded in having that ruling reversed.

Detectives feared she might try to kill herself because she had taken a drugs overdose days after giving a tearful television account of how her fiancé had been stabbed 37

Continued on page 2, col 3

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Major sanctions £7m 'blitz on Blair' strategy

JOHN MAJOR is to take the Tory party into the most expensive negative political advertising campaign in British election history.

The £7 million publicity offensive announced last night by Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, will be dominated by personalised attacks on Tony Blair, and on Labour's taxation and spending policies.

The Conservative leadership, undaunted by criticism of its "demon eyes" advertisement, will return to a similar theme in the four-month campaign, which will be unveiled on January 6. It has been devised by Lord Saatchi, Sir Timothy Bell, and Baron Chadlington, the party's experts on advertising, and

was presented to the Cabinet last week. Thousands of poster sites have been booked until polling day, which is assumed to be May 1. The posters will be changed about once a month.

The advertisements will highlight Mr Blair's policy changes since he became an MP in 1983. His opposition to the Thatcher trade union reforms, support for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and early opposition to membership of the Common Market will form the main thrust of the attacks.

Mr Major, who in the past has expressed misgivings about negative advertising, has been won over. One senior Tory strategist

■ The Tories believe the costliest ever negative advertising campaign can help them overhaul Labour's lead in the polls and build on the success of the 'demon eyes' posters. Andrew Pierce reports

said: "Of course it's negative advertising. Labour's will be the same. It will be the most negative advertising campaign so far. The gloves are off." Mr Major was so enthused by the strategy, which was unveiled by Dr Mawhinney, that he told friends afterwards: "I have never felt so optimistic about our chances."

The Tories' private polling has

shown that despite criticism by churchmen, the demon eyes campaign was a startling success among focus groups of floating voters, who for the first time began to question what lay behind Mr Blair's smile.

The Tory source said: "The word 'trust' will be a key feature. We will be saying, how can you trust this man who has changed so much?"

Has he really changed? We will ensure Tony Blair's past catches up with him. It is the logical extension of the 'New Labour, New Danger' strategy."

Lord Saatchi, Sir Timothy, and Lord Chadlington, dubbed The Three Musketeers at Conservative Central Office, have also invented a new Labour tax campaign. It focuses on £30 billion of spending to which the Tories claim the Labour Party is committed. "Tax and trust. It's worked before, it will work again," said a Tory Central Office official.

The leadership has drawn up a high-risk strategy on Europe which seeks to portray Mr Blair as a man who will join over British powers

en masse to Brussels. Ministers believe the attacks will not trigger renewed fighting by focusing on the threat to sovereignty posed by a Labour government.

Labour's proposed windfall tax will be portrayed as an assault on the millions of small shareholders who cashed in on the Tory privatisation policies. The minimum wage will be presented as a tax on jobs which could push unemployment back over the two-million mark.

Millions of pounds have poured into Central Office coffers as the election approaches. Only three years ago the party was £18 million in the red. The debts have been paid off and the party finances

have been transformed to enable Mr Major to fight the most extravagant campaign so far. Labour's huge lead in the opinion polls galvanised many disillusioned Tory donors to return to the fold.

A £200,000 "war room" has been set up at Central Office to co-ordinate the election campaign. A state of the art rapid rebuttal computer system, similar to Labour's "Excalibur", is up and running. It has access to Tory and Labour election material dating back to 1929. Extra staff are being taken on.

The Tory source said: "The strategy is in place. The money is available. The election campaign proper begins next week."

'Hospitals send elderly home early to save cash'

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of elderly patients are being discharged from hospital too early in an attempt to save money, and then need readmitting days later, Labour said last night. Tessa Jowell, the Shadow Health Minister, condemned an increase of more than 11 per cent in readmissions since the NHS market was introduced in 1991, and said that the "revolving door" policy had in fact cost the taxpayer an extra £500 million over the past four years.

Ms Jowell blamed the rise in readmitted patients on added pressure to reduce NHS waiting lists and make beds available. Hospitals that run out of cash are entitled to release beds for patients referred by GP fundholders who have their own budgets, enabling them to jump the NHS waiting lists.

"The Tories have created a conveyor belt NHS where patients are pushed up and sent home," Ms Jowell said last night. A Labour Government would make reducing the number of readmissions a priority, she said.

Some 57,231 patients aged over 75 were readmitted last year within 28 days of being discharged from hospital, costing £128.3 million in 1994-95. In 1991-92, 51,402 elderly patients were readmitted, costing £115m. The total number of emergency admissions for patients aged 75 or over last year was 806,076.

Ms Jowell will use the figures to promote Labour's proposals for a "recovery service" for elderly people, to be announced in the new year.

Labour plans to test a number of pilot schemes to find out the best way of giving elderly people additional support before they go home, such as extra convalescence places. The cost would be met by the decrease in readmissions for this age group.

Elderly patients tend to stay in hospital an average three to four days longer than other adult patients, blocking the beds for other emergency admissions. Beds are more likely to be blocked by the elderly in the winter months, with an increase in viruses and flu-like illnesses.

Hospitals have been under added pressure due to a dramatic decrease in the number of beds, from 489,000 in 1974 to 275,000 in 1995. Ms Jowell said: "Figures show increasing numbers of elderly patients are being discharged from hospitals before they are fit enough to cope alone at home."

Often an extra two or three days bed could make a difference on the way to recovery, she argued. An alternative "halfway house" could be set up to help the elderly convalesce. "There is a yawning gap in the care of elderly people and Labour will be bringing forward proposals for a recovery service for elderly people early next year."

□ Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, is to speed the elimination of mixed-sex wards. In a letter to be sent to all NHS trusts, he is ordering hospital managers to set local timetables for the conversion of wards to single-sex use.



Tracie Andrews after being released from Eastwood Women's Prison last night

Road rage woman freed

times after a car chase through country lanes.

After Miss Andrews was released from Eastwood Women's Prison, she clasped her arms around to face the cameras. As she stood by his side weeping, Tim Robinson, her solicitor, said: "She is overwhelmed by the events of the past few days. She is very pleased to be going home and to her freedom."

He added that the publicity surrounding the case had resulted in "a significant witness" coming forward and that his client was very grateful for that. Police, however

said that they knew nothing about any such development.

Miss Andrews will have to stay with her mother, Irene, and stepfather Alan Carter at their three bedroom home until she appears in court again in February.

Miss Andrews was driven away for a private reunion with her family and Karla, her six year old daughter from a previous relationship.

Her stepfather, Alan Clark, said: "We are delighted and relieved that she will be able to spend Christmas with her daughter and the family. The Judge's decision is just

confirmation of our belief in Tracie's innocence."

The prosecution alleged at last week's hearing that Miss Andrews was a violent woman who had pulled a knife on her fiancé and on a previous boyfriend. Magistrates heard how she had a row with Mr Harvey earlier on the day he died and that the couple had argued over a black woolen hat that she had shown him as a joke.

Mr Harvey was stabbed in the neck, face, back, head and upper body. Two main arteries were severed.

Teachers challenge pensions changes

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

A TEACHERS' union is to take Gillian Shephard to court over changes in early retirement rules for teachers which, it claimed, were "slipped out" in the run-up to Christmas to avoid criticism.

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) consulted Cherie Booth, the barrister who is married to Tony Blair, before launching its action against the Education and Employment Secretary. The case will be heard early in the new year when the union will seek an injunction preventing the rules from being applied.

Teaching unions have been swamped with calls from anxious members since Mrs Shephard announced that from April the costs of early retirement would have to be borne by schools. The ATL, the third biggest union, has taken 12,000 calls in six weeks.

Conscious that most schools would not be able to afford early retirement packages, thousands of teachers hope to beat the deadline. But last week the teachers' pensions agency warned schools that applications would be granted in March only under strict conditions. Staff could not be taken back on temporary contracts. The ATL argues that Mrs Shephard acted unlawfully in making the change without notice or consultation. It will claim the restrictions contravene established practice.

Peter Smith, the union's general secretary, said: "We believe the Government slipped this out just before Christmas in the hope that no one would notice. Mrs Shephard has been rumoured. While she seems intent on playing Scrooge with teachers' and lecturers' livelihoods for Christmas, she will now find herself hauled before the courts in the new year."

Dying man moved on by hospital guards

A man died hours after two nurses asked security guards to move him away from their hospital's gates because they thought he was acting suspiciously. A short time later the man collapsed with hypothermia in freezing temperatures. He was found by two other off-duty nurses about 300 yards from St Mary's Maternity hospital, Manchester. They tried to revive him, then phoned an ambulance to take him to Manchester Royal Infirmary, where he died an hour later. Health officials were investigating the claims last night and trying to identify the nurses involved. Staff at St Mary's were being questioned about the incident, which happened at the weekend. The victim, who has not been identified, is thought to be aged 40 to 60, and was unshaven with a blue waist-length, tipped anorak. He had no identification but was wearing signet rings.

Christie murder case remand

A 32-year-old man was remanded in custody charged with the murder of Russell Christie, younger brother of the Olympic athlete Linford Christie. Simon Williams, unemployed, of no fixed address, will reappear before Marylebone magistrates on December 30. Russell Christie, 34, died in hospital on Friday from stab wounds after police found him lying on a road in Notting Hill, west London. Linford Christie, 36, has flown home from training in Australia to console his father James.

Ten jailed for Benn fight riot

Three men were jailed for six months and seven for three months for violent disorder at the world boxing championship fight between Nigel Benn and Juan Gomez of Spain at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham in September 1994. The violence, which involved more than 100 spectators, started when rival Birmingham City and Manchester City football supporters clashed. Judge Elizabeth Fisher, sitting at Birmingham Crown Court, described the scenes as disgraceful.

Viewers vote for Blair

Tony Blair has been voted Man of the Year by Television viewers for the third successive year. The Labour leader received 53 per cent of the 8,422 votes cast, more than three times that of John Major, who came second. The Princess of Wales was the most popular woman, beating Lisa Potts, heroine of the Wolverhampton school machete attack, into second place. In a second contest the Prime Minister was voted "Turkey of the Year", well ahead of last year's winner, the Prince of Wales, and the footballer Paul Gascoigne.

French tourist found dead

A French woman in her thirties has been found dead near her Irish holiday home, a two-storey farmhouse near Schull in west Cork. Her partly clothed body was found yesterday in a remote lane by a local man on a morning walk. The woman, who was identified locally as Sophie Boumal from Paris, had suffered head injuries. She arrived in Ireland last Friday and had been due to return to France today. It was understood that she had been staying at the farmhouse on her own.

Banknote trickster jailed

A trickster who convinced his victims that he could turn paper into banknotes and duped two men into handing over £18,000 each, was sentenced yesterday at Southwark Crown Court to 18 months' jail for conspiracy to defraud. Claude Ismael, 41, from Paris, told businessmen that he had already made millions of pounds for President Mandela of South Africa. Jean Garin Dakou, 30, of Albany Street, Camden, north London, was also jailed for 12 months after admitting conspiracy to defraud.

Teacher's trust raises £52,000

A trust fund set up in memory of Gwen Mayor, the teacher killed in the Dunblane massacre, has raised £52,000. The Gwen Mayor Trust will be formally established next month to benefit arts and sports projects in Scottish primary schools. A total of £7.3 million is now held in three funds, the largest being The Dunblane Fund standing at £4.5 million, which will be distributed mainly among the families of the dead and injured.

MoT certificate scrapped

The MoT certificate is to be replaced by computer records as the Government tries to eradicate fraud costing millions of pounds. John Bowis, the Road Safety Minister, announced plans to link 18,000 MoT testing stations to a central computer. Details of each test would be entered into a database which could be checked by police and insurers. Motorists will be given a computer print-out after the test instead of the existing certificate.

Record Christmas post

The Post Office has delivered a record number of Christmas greetings, handling two billion cards and letters. John Roberts, its chief executive, said: "For eight consecutive days Royal Mail has been handling more than 100 million letters and cards every 24 hours — a huge achievement." On Monday, December 16, more than 128 million items, nearly double the normal daily volume, were handled, the largest number ever posted in a single day.

Baby penguins go public

Three blackfooted penguins made their public debut at London Zoo yesterday. Rudolf, Tinsel and Nigel, who were born there ten days ago, will become permanent occupants of the penguin pool early in the new year. Blackfooted penguins originate from the South African west coast and since 1950 as a result of over-fishing, illegal collection of eggs and oil pollution.

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Mayhew will not penalise loyalists over car bomb

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW fought yesterday to keep the Ulster peace process alive when he indicated that loyalists would not be expelled from the Stormont talks after the weekend car bombing in Belfast.

As loyalist politicians said the loyalist ceasefire was intact, the Northern Ireland Secretary praised them for repudiating the car bomb attack on Sunday which injured a notorious republican.

Sir Patrick's comments came after the two fringe loyalist parties with links to terrorists dissociated themselves from the bomb attack on Eddie Copeland, who was named in Parliament in 1994 as an IRA leader.

Gary McMichael, leader of the Ulster Democratic Party, the political wing of the Ulster Defence Association, said: "It is terrible, it is tragic. I am opposed to violence from whatever the source." He

stopped short of condemning the bombing.

Mr McMichael said that the failure of the Combined Loyalist Military Command to issue a statement after the attack indicated that its two-year-old truce was still in place. His comments increased speculation in Belfast that the bomb may have been a warning by loyalists — possibly the UDA — to the IRA to end its violence or risk a return to widespread tit-for-tat attacks.

Loyalist sources made clear that the IRA's attempt to murder two police officers in a children's hospital on Friday as they guarded a senior Unionist could not go unanswered. However, security sources said that even a warning shot was fraught with risks in the present atmosphere.

Sir Patrick welcomed Mr McMichael's criticisms of the bombing, which contrasted with Sinn Féin's failure to

repudiate the IRA attack on Friday night. Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, said he regretted the shooting.

Sir Patrick told BBC Radio 4's *Today*: "I notice that both [loyalist] parties have denounced this... That seems in very marked contrast with the leader of Sinn Féin." The Northern Ireland Secretary refused to speculate on whether the loyalists would be expelled from the talks but his comments indicated that ministers want them to remain at the negotiations.

Sir Patrick's comments infuriated republicans, who said it was hypocritical of him to praise loyalists when they had failed to condemn the bombing.

□ More than 100 republican and loyalist terrorists were released from Northern Ireland jails yesterday on Christmas parole. The Irish Government released 20 republican prisoners on parole.

Trimble attacked over deal

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND NICHOLAS WATT

A ROW over David Trimble's leadership of the Ulster Unionists erupted yesterday after his decision to join with Sir James Goldsmith in campaigning for a referendum over Europe.

In return for £200,000 of promotional funding, the Ulster Unionists will campaign in Northern Ireland for a referendum, and Jim Nicholson, the party's sole member of the European Parliament, will join the Europe of Nations political grouping headed by

Sir James, a French MEP. Mr Trimble had to deny that the alliance with Sir James, whose Referendum Party is contesting the general election, would have any influence on Westminster politics. Sir James insists he will not be involved in any other area of Unionist campaigning.

At Westminster, the Tories depend on the Ulster Unionist MPs to keep them in power. Mr Trimble said: "We will continue to vote in the same way as we have done in the

Commons. We will be voting as Ulster Unionists."

John Taylor, the deputy party leader, criticised the decision and said that he had not been involved and that the party's MPs were not consulted. Senior Unionists fear the link could alienate the Tory and Labour leaderships.

Mr Trimble's opponents, who include most of the party's MPs, are furious with him for negotiating the deal. They say that his failure to inform

steeple
as bell-
lose it



Parade
blue
are back dogs

Capital
after call-in

Holiday chalets are last resort as nimbies threaten plans for new jails to house ever more inmates

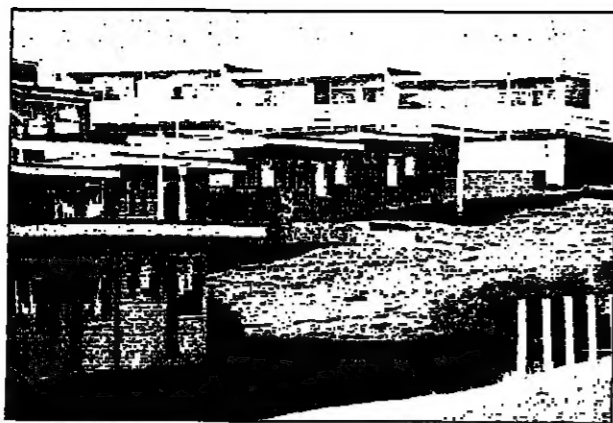
Former Pontins camp may be converted into prison

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

PRISON Service officials are negotiating to buy a disused holiday camp to house up to 700 inmates and ease the growing accommodation crisis in jails. A planning application to convert the former Pontins camp at Heysham, near Morecambe, Lancashire, is the latest in a series of emergency proposals.

The 63-acre site has been empty since the Pontins camp closed two years ago. The move to use it for prisoners was made only days before a decision yesterday by Doncaster council to oppose the proposed conversion into a jail of a former RAF base at Finningley in south Yorkshire.

The opposition in Doncaster is recurring elsewhere as people fight to stop more prisons and centres for persistent young offenders being built in their neighbourhoods. The Heysham site, near Preston and Haverigg prisons and Lancaster Farms young



The chalets at Heysham will be surrounded by a five-metre security fence if plans are approved

offender institution, would be converted to hold 400 to 700 low-security category C prisoners. After renovation it could take its first inmates by May next year.

Before becoming a holiday camp, the site was used by the Ministry of Defence and during the war was an internment camp. Richard Tilt, Director-General of the Prison Service,

said the holiday camp was one of a number of options, which included other disused military bases and acquiring a former floating jail moored on the Hudson River near New York. "We look as if we will be back at our full capacity between the middle and end of February."

"We must do everything possible to have accommoda-

tion for those sent to us by the courts. We want to avoid using police cells," Mr Tilt said.

A planning application to reroof the floating prison, *Resolution*, in Portland harbour has been lodged with the local authority. Prison officials who visited the ship recently believe it meets all their requirements to hold up to 500 low-risk inmates.

But Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "Buying a holiday camp is an act of utter desperation. Right-wing Conservative MPs have often said that prison is like a holiday camp — now it seems to be coming true."

Pontins said yesterday that it had no other sites available. The Heysham site was sold to a private buyer about two years ago and is about half a mile from the nearest homes. The Home Office plan suggests the camp would be used for three years and require about 300 staff.

No new buildings are



Cleaners report for duty in the heyday of the holiday camp, where prisoners could soon be stopping out

planned and some existing buildings may have to be demolished. The plan includes a five-metre security fence.

The county council said it planned extensive consultation, with an open meeting for local people. The council would look at the impact on the environment, public safety, the possibility of increased traffic and economic benefits.

The prison population is predicted to reach 60,000 by March, following a seasonal drop to 57,000 this week. A further six prisons are being built or are planned to cope with the increase, arising out of the Government's "prison works" policy, and a further 12 will be needed. Mr Tilt expressed concern at the growing "not in my back yard"

opposition to proposed new jails. "The difficulty is that we get driven more and more into remote sites. It is less satisfactory for everything, service, staff and prisoners' families," he said.

In Liverpool up to 50 objections have been lodged against plans to build an extra cell block to hold 118 detainees at the new 600-inmate Alfreton

prison at Fazakerley. In Manchester a full planning inquiry has been held into the proposed Agecroft jail at Salford, and the Prison Service has abandoned a site for a new jail at Telford in Shropshire after a geological survey. Work has still to start on building five secure training centres for persistent young offenders aged 12-14.

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Former Times man tops book list

BY BRIAN MACARTHUR

WITH more than 18,000 copies sold last week of *Notes from a Small Island*, the travel writer Bill Bryson, a former sub-editor on *The Times*, is Britain's bestselling author this Christmas.

Second is Dava Sobel's surprise bestseller *Longitude* (12,280 copies), followed by *Shooting Stars*, the television tie-in from the comedians Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer. Dick Francis's *Come to Grief*, Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity* and Nicholas Evans's *The Horse Whisperer*.

More than 66,000 copies of the paperback edition of *Notes from a Small Island*, the British travelogue published by Black Swan, have been sold in the past eight weeks, earning £460,000, according to Whitaker BookTrack, which monitors sales in more than 700 bookshops. *Longitude*, the bestselling hardback, published by Fourth Estate, has earned slightly more — £550,000 since November. *Winnie the Pooh: Now We Are Seventy* was the bestselling children's book.

The figures demonstrate the importance of Christmas to the book trade. At the beginning of November, sales were running at £10 million a week. Last week they were worth £26 million.

Archbishop appeals to 'spiritual refugees'

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

MANY people today are "spiritual refugees" who have lost their moral and spiritual roots, according to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Dr George Carey, referring to the plight of the refugees of Rwanda on this morning's *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4, said: "Jesus was not born in a refugee camp but it was the next thing to it."

The crisis in Rwanda and the birth of Christ made him wonder at the number of lost people in the world today.

"They may have comfortable homes and friends around," Dr Carey said, "but they are spiritual refugees, sometimes aware in their heart of hearts that they are living in another kind of transit camp."

Dr Carey continued: "So many people in our society have lost their religious and moral roots. They have lost their place in a shared understanding of what life is for, pursuing short-term happiness but often failing to find spiritual fulfilment."

Christmas was a chance to take stock. "There are many who stay in today's spiritual refugee camp. They have been there so long that they have forgotten about the country. Christian people call home, the one where God is King."

Archbishop of York, page 6

Cautionary tales to chill the blood



MEDICAL BRIEFING

THE forecasters have promised a cold Christmas, with biting east winds. This will test the coronary arteries of anybody with cardiovascular disease, whether or not they are aware of the state of their circulation.

When I was a country GP it was comparatively easy to prepare for most of the problems occasioned by hard weather, but impossible to allow for the upset to routine invariably caused by a cold snap. Elderly patients fell and fractured bones; cases of *flu* turned to pneumonia. The most common emergencies were heart attacks and strokes. Both are more likely up to 48 hours after a patient with a cardiovascular problem has been severely chilled; 20 minutes' chilling is enough to cause the damage.

Problems caused by cold weather are related to changes in the mechanisms involved in blood clotting. When someone has been exposed to very cold weather, the blood clots with greater ease thereafter for 36 to 48 hours as the platelet count (platelets are the small particles involved in blood clotting), the red cell count and the fibrinogen levels are increased. They are all factors which make coronary thrombosis or an ischaemic stroke more likely. An ischaemic stroke results from a wayward

clot blocking a cerebral blood vessel, whereas other strokes are caused when a cerebral vessel ruptures.

Other patients become casualties while shovelling snow. This is a job for younger members of the family, whose arteries are wide open and whose coronary circulation is smooth-flowing. Younger members should also fetch the wood or coal at night, as leaving a fire to cross a dark, windswept yard is asking for trouble.

A car that has been left out overnight in several degrees of frost can seem as cold as a household deepfreeze. Nobody would put a middle-aged or elderly patient with a suspect circulation into a deepfreeze, nor should they expect someone with cardiovascular problems to sit in an ice-cold car while it warms up.

The temperature of the air which is breathed in is also important. In a cold wind, angina can often be prevented by wearing a scarf over the mouth so that the air is trapped and warmed before it is inhaled. If central heating were left on at night, the number of early-morning heart attacks would be reduced.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

Family
by Chris

SAFETY GUIDE

Wanted: ways to
spend £20m on
the millennium

Family see girl, 6, killed by Christmas tree lights

By IAN KEY

A GIRL aged six was electrocuted in front of her family as they gathered to watch her turn on the lights of their Christmas tree.

Cara Weatherstone stood with her bare foot on a copper gas pipe to reach the switch for the fairy lights, which were plugged into a table lamp. Her parents and six brothers and sisters were helpless as she suffered a 240-volt shock.

One sister, Fiona, 14, tried to pull her away, but was unable to save her. The little girl, described as happy and popular by neighbours and teachers in Hornsea, East Yorkshire, was dead on arrival at hospital.

Her grandfather, George Weatherstone, 67, said: "It's such a tragedy. She was a wonderful little girl. I wish it had been me instead. She had turned the lights on many times before."

"It was just unfortunate that she had her bare foot on the pipe to the gas fire. She was earthed and she could not be thrown off by the shock. The current grabbed her."

"Fiona tried to push her off and got a tingle herself and then Cara fell off. The whole family saw it but could do nothing. The only mercy is that she would have died instantly and felt nothing."

"It is a tragic accident. Cara was a very well-behaved girl, like her brothers and sisters. All the children knew right from wrong and did not mess around with dangerous things."

The lights had been used for



Cara Weatherstone: a happy and popular girl

the past four years and they had been tried out already this year before the child's planned starring role in the family ceremony.

Her father, Anthony, 40, a chef at a remand centre, and her mother, Beverley, 38, were confronting their grief and trying to prepare Christmas for their remaining children Nicky, 15, Fiona, Aaron 12, Maxine, 10, Yvonne, 5, and Marcus, 18 months.

The parents issued a statement saying: "We are all trying to come to terms with what has happened. In the interests of our children and relatives, we would ask for some time to ourselves so that we can continue with our lives, and more importantly the Christmas period, which of course will be a difficult period for us all."

Investigators from Yorkshire Electricity and trading standards officers were examining the lights and the wiring yesterday and will prepare

reports for the coroner. A post-mortem examination will be held later.

Inspector Dennis Cheater of Hornsea police said the children would be interviewed, but added: "It is a very, very tragic accident."

"This is a terrible thing to happen, but it is particularly poignant at this time of year. The house wiring and the lamp that the lights were plugged into are all going to be examined by electricity and trading standards officers. We are hopeful that that will give

us a better idea of what happened."

He urged all parents to be very careful in wiring fairy lights: "The obvious warning is be very careful when you're wiring up Christmas lights because you're dealing with electricity and it can kill. If you're not sure, consult an electrician."

The dead child was remembered fondly in the neighbourhood. Janice Watson, 44, a neighbour, said: "This has devastated us all. Cara was special, a little angel. She was a happy, lovable soul."

Derek Nightingale, head teacher at the Hornsea school, said: "She was a beautiful little girl - smiling, happy, cheerful and hardworking. She was popular and I can think of a number of little friends who will be devastated by this."

"We had just said goodbye to them the day before - all these happy little faces going home for Christmas and then something like this happens. You don't believe that it can happen to one of the children in your care. We're all very upset - I think of her little smiling face and then I think 'God, I'll never see her again'."



Cara, second left, front row, in a recent family portrait with her parents, Beverley and Anthony Weatherstone, with baby Marcus and four of their five other children. They could all only watch as Cara was electrocuted

SAFETY GUIDE

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents advises parents to follow these guidelines on festive lights:

- Make sure fairy lights conform to British Standard 464 and preferably carry the kite mark.
- Always inspect them to make sure wires have not been pulled loose and that there are no cracks in bulbs.
- Always turn off and unplug lights before changing a bulb or making any changes.
- Lights should not be placed near anything combustible.
- Never use Christmas tree lights outside.
- If they show signs of wear, consider replacing them.
- All lights should come with a pre-packaged plug and correct fuse.
- Do not run cables under carpets or leave them in an area where they can be tripped over.
- Do not leave lights on if you go out.

Wanted: ways to spend £20m on the millennium

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

AT LEAST £20 million from the National Lottery will be made available to fund local celebrations of the millennium all around the country, the Millennium Commission said yesterday.

In spite of continued uncertainty about the future of the £700 million Millennium Exhibition, planned to be built at Greenwich, on the banks of the Thames, a spokeswoman for the commission said that a string of smaller-scale projects, to be known collectively as the Millennium Festival, would go ahead.

Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, will launch a consultation paper on the festival next Monday and will invite suggestions from interested parties on how the money can best be spent.

The Millennium Commission spokeswoman said that the money was not likely to be used to fund street parties. "There could be local celebrations linked to new buildings and capital projects built with Millennium Commission money," she said. "We are inviting suggestions."

The commission is clearly hoping that grassroots enthusiasm for the Millennium Festival will outweigh growing public and political scepticism about the troubled Millennium Exhibition.

Organisers of the £700 million exhibition admitted yesterday that they were attempting to slice £100 million off their proposed budget in an eleventh-hour attempt to win the Labour Party's support for the event.

At present the commission has promised to give £200 million of lottery money to the event, with the private sector putting up £150 million and the remaining £350 million coming from other income, including ticket sales.

Jack Cunningham, the Shadow Heritage Secretary, said at the weekend that Labour would support the project only when it had a "realistic" budget. He had previously indicated that the Labour Party would not be prepared to support the exhibition until it had a firm limit on liability.

Staff at the Millennium

Commission who are now working with consultants employed by Millennium Central, the exhibition's operating company, believe that significant savings can be made on the project without damaging its centrepiece, a huge dome built next to the Thames at Greenwich.

"It may be possible to reduce the infrastructure, possibly by not building additional piers on to the waterfront and by not building any other pavilions," a spokesman for Millennium Central said. "But it would be hoped that the inherent nature of the project remains the same."

Cost savings are also expected to follow from the Government's decision last week to transfer Millennium Central from the private to the public sector. That will enable some government departments to take on some of the costs.

Tenders for construction managers' positions and for various building materials went out last weekend but it is feared that the project will not be completed on time unless the final approval for the project is given by the end of January.

■ Nearly one third of the British people would consider visiting the Millennium Exhibition during 2000 if the project went ahead, according to a poll published yesterday.

The NOP survey, conducted by Greenwich council, predicted that the total number of British visitors during the year-long event could exceed 14 million. About half the visitors would come from the North and the Midlands, with 7.03 million coming from the South.

Len Duvall, leader of Greenwich council, said that the survey of 986 people aged 15 and over demonstrated that the exhibition had nationwide support.

It is important that the Millennium Exhibition is a national celebration," he said. "In a few days there will be New Year's Eve celebrations and it doesn't take a lot to imagine how significant the new millennium will be for the country from which the world measures the passage of time."

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Hidden behind headlines, love is still the best news

Despite considerable differences in the background, style and content of the accounts of Jesus's birth in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, both are clear that the birth took place almost unnoticed.

The Emperor Augustus missed it completely, understandably preoccupied with holding the disparate Roman Empire together. He was certainly too busy to worry about what was going on in a cowshed in a forlorn and faraway place. Though not so far away, Herod missed it too, obsessed with his own power games, finding out too late and then responding with butchery rather than wonder. When it was right

under his nose, the innkeeper missed it, dazzled by the roaring trade that the census had brought. No room for God made flesh. All of this is part of the mystery of the Christmas story. They all missed it.

The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem happened nevertheless, God came and broke history in two. But if the event of all time could be so obviously missed, it makes me wonder what we are missing today, of which we should be aware.

The headlines during 1996 have been generally depressing. They have homed in on the prospect of monetary union and the advent of the euro; widespread unrest in

the former Soviet bloc; carnage in Africa; election fever in America, already beginning to break out here; recession giving way to the "feel-good" factor — or maybe not. But what are we missing that has not grabbed the headlines day after day?

There can be no doubt that much of the talk has been about morality — values, standards and behaviour. The authentic voices have emerged from where perhaps we might least have expected them: from martyrdom, from suffering; from people and places where the destructiveness of human wickedness and sinfulness has been powerfully challenged and paid

for at a price beyond all telling. In order that God's goodness and ours might continue to be asserted and endorsed.

One such voice is that of Frances Lawrence, who used the pages of this newspaper to call for a reformation of society with an emphasis on moral and spiritual values. Her challenge has struck deep chords within us all. Do we respond with conviction or miss the opportunity? The tragedy at Dunblane hit the

headlines too, a modern-day Herod massacring the innocent.

What then about the tremendous wonder of childhood, the sheer gift that childhood brings? Jesus puts it to us that unless we ourselves become as little children, we shall never enter the kingdom of God.

The two days following Christmas, Stephen's martyrdom and the Massacre of the Innocents, cast a long shadow over the manger at Bethlehem and our celebration of Christ's birth. They are a reminder to us of the potential within the heart of humanity for evil as well as good, and the consequences of making such choices not only for ourselves but also for others.

But the darkness of this shadow can never overcome the hope and promise which the Christ child still offers for our society and world. Bethlehem is God's way of loving. In spite of all the talk and the debate about morality, we should beware lest we simply shape another idol in our own image. Only God can make us moral and he does so not by chiding or cajoling us, but by loving us endlessly,

eternally. In Christ, God has acted towards us. He has set before us His way, which protests against our being conformed to this world and which calls for a transformation through the renewal of heart, mind and soul — the deep-down things of the spirit, so that we "may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect".

The Prologue of John's Gospel, so familiar from our carol services, is a profound statement about the being and presence of God in the world. It is an eternal presence — God still happens, whether we notice Him or not. Even so, giving ourselves the space to look beyond the

headlines and to see Him can yield our lives an ultimate purpose, rather than the disharmony and cacophony which comes from missing Him.

Can we steal away from the treadmill for a moment, pause amidst the busyness and simply wonder? Sleep herds with a little time to spare while their flocks sleep and kings gazing into skies discovered what everyone else seems to have missed. In the darkness of our streets, the everlasting light still shines.

If only we could open our eyes and see.

Dr David Hope is Archbishop of York.

From pear trees to leaping lords, shopping without frontiers cuts the cost of the 12 days of Christmas

Why true lovers should put their faith in Europe

THE cost of a true lovers' Christmas has been dramatically reduced this year by an inspired burst of Euro enthusiasm.

In the past, true lovers may have shown a certain British reserve in their shopping trips for the gifts listed in the traditional song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. For 24 years — since just before Britain joined the then Common Market — *The Times* has estimated the price of the gifts each festive season, and the purchases have been assumed to be on the home market. But not this year.

For a true lover, the world should surely be his oyster — or, if not the world, then at least the European Union. And it was definitely time for him to try a little variety in his Christmas. Having the same old list every year hardly counts as impulse-buying.

The result would make any lover's swain a fully committed pro-European. His bill is less than it has been since the early Eighties.

The change began with the three French hens. Hitherto, the true lover has tried getting them, free-range but dead and over-ready, from Tesco. On other occasions, more prettily, he has bought live birds in fancy French breeds.

This year he coupled a business-like approach with a touch of Gallic exoticism, buying his poultry wholesale — a box of 30 — from specialist producers just across the



By Robin Young

Channel in Liqueur, near Calais. After all, the original version of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* is believed to have been French.

Once thus started on a continental shopping spree, there was no holding him. The partridges were found cheapest in Giron in northern Spain, while the pear trees came most economically from a Belgian nursery capable of supplying half-standards, a cheaper form apparently largely abandoned by British nurserymen, and in a choice of 60 different varieties.

The turtle doves, a protected species, remained a problem, but the pet shops in Spain and Greece promised that they could supply appropriate birds at the equivalent of £10 a pair less than the lover paid last year. Four colly birds we

have always taken to be blackbirds, another protected species. Sometimes the lover has made do with hypothetical purchases from British cage-bird breeders who seldom, in fact, have any stock available to sell.

On other occasions, he has been obliged to accept stuffed birds, which are usually grisly road accidents resurrected to a semblance of still life by the taxidermist's art. The opening of the French market, keen both on cage birds and taxidermy, offers savings on either sort.

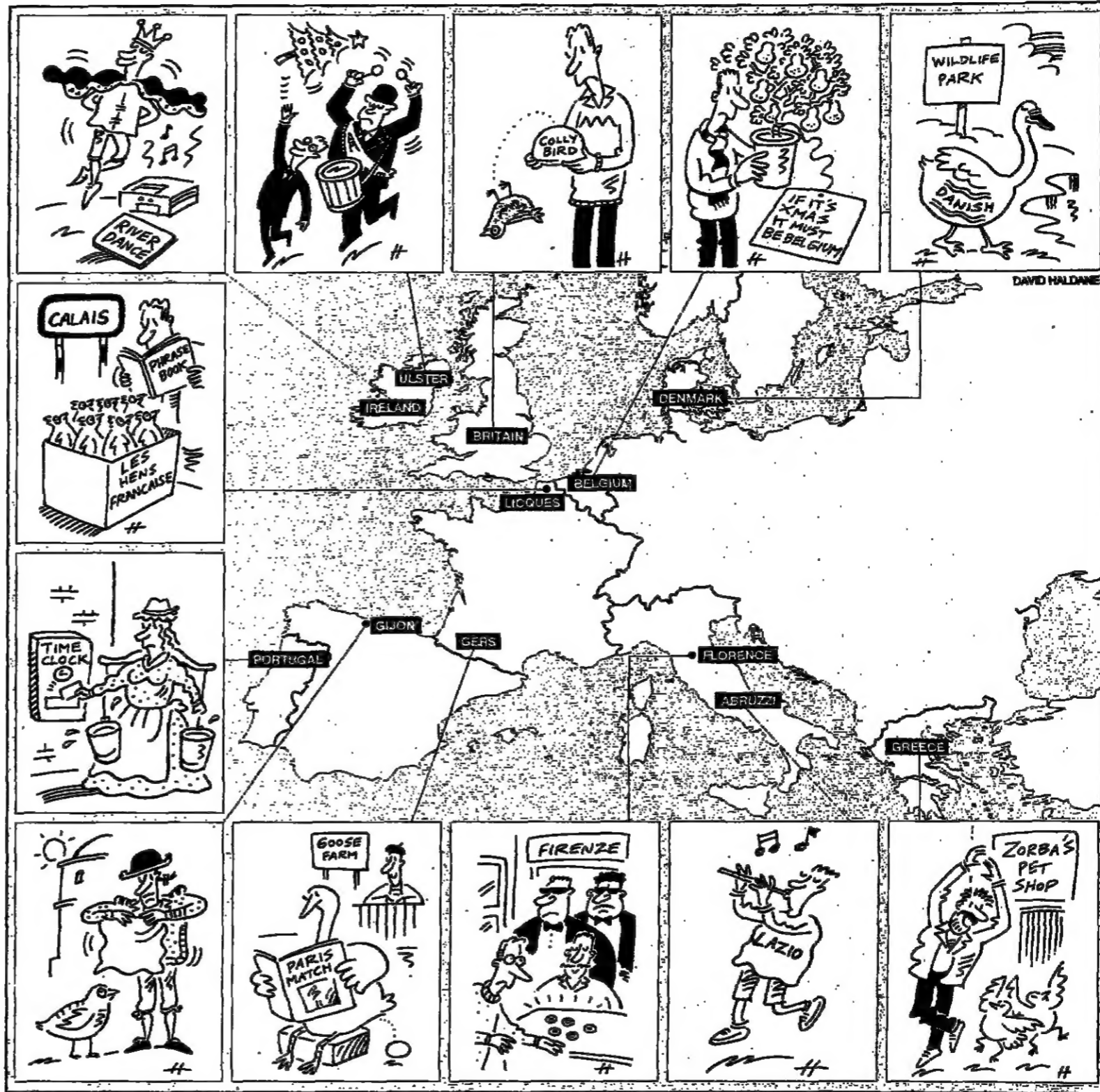
Five gold rings, needed on eight days to make a total purchase of 40, saw keen competition from airport duty-free shops, jewellery wholesalers in centres such as Amsterdam, and backstreet traders. The contract was finally won by an Italian in Florence who happened to have a job lot of nine-carat signet rings available at a bargain price.

Geese a-laying have been such a difficulty that, like the swans a-swimming, the enamoured lover has often tried adopting them on behalf of the object of his affections through schemes run by the Wetlands and Wildlife Trust. In Britain, farmyard geese do not start laying until February.

Prospects are brighter, geese cheaper, laying earlier and available wholesale. In the goose-farming department of Gers in south-west France.

This year's swans came at a bargain price from a wildlife park in Denmark with excess stock. The costs are dearer than adoption, but the live birds possibly preferable, even though the lady will now have to look after 42 of each.

The eight maids a-milking could be recruited in Portugal at hourly rates which make even the pitiful sums dictated by British wage agreements seem greedy, while nine drummers drumming could surely be drummed up in Ulster, outside the marching season, at no expense at all.



Similarly, the lords a-leaping are this year going to be Irish peers, sporting fellows with no parliamentary expenses to claim, who will doubtless do the necessary jumping for the pure fun of it.

The ten pipers piping offered a wide choice of options to replace the Caledonian mercenaries who, thanks to Musicians' Union rates, have

profited hugely from the lovers' call for their services in past years. Last year, the Scots Guards charged £65 a man per appearance.

This year there were far lower bids from bagpipers in Brittany, Greece, Scandinavia and Italy, finally settled by a band of pipers from the Abruzzo mountain region of Italy who pointed out that ten

of their number could be heard on three separate CDs, one for each of three days, at a total cost as low as £19.25. That reduced the pipers' bill to less than 1 per cent of last year's charge.

That precedent persuaded the lover that his girlfriend could also well do without 11 ladies tripping about the place in person for two days on end.

He bought their performance on a couple of rather delightful videos instead, saving further thousands of pounds at a stroke. Finally, the true lover has a new love: the euro. A single currency would, he calculates, have saved him a further £78 in commission and currency exchange costs, without taking into account the small sums of foreign money

he is left with at the end of his trading. As it is, though, his move into Europe has made the Christmas shopping business a lot more fun and made the total cost lower than any year since 1982, which was a particularly thrifty time when the sum was held down to £4,970.12.

Last-minute, page 11

ADDING UP THE PRICE OF TRUE LOVE

In the table below exchange rates are tourist rates applying on December 17.

	1994	1995	1996
A partridge in a pear tree, on 12 days	54.00	47.98	38.80
Three French hens, on 11 days	108.00	150.00	97.46
Four colly birds, on 9 days	117.30	800.00	173.49
Five gold rings, on 8 days	720.00	3,000.00	648.23
Six geese a-laying, on 7 days	109.80	580.00	200.48
Seven swans a-swimming, on 6 days	630.00	840.00	1,048.22
Eight maids a-milking, on 5 days	1,065.00	1,050.00	3,280.48
Nine drummers drumming, on 4 days	110.40	113.80	88.56
Ten pipers piping, on 3 days	1,242.00	2,240.00	3,280.48
Eleven ladies dancing, on 2 days	1,095.00	1,950.00	19.25
Twelve lords a-leaping, day's expenses	2,180.00	2,750.00	28.98
Totals	8,189.30	14,827.48	8,028.93

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Grisly trophy is first step in educating children about endangered species

By DANIEL MCGRODY

THE children were nervous at first and nudged each other forward, not wanting to get too close to the severed elephant's foot on the floor of the school assembly hall.

Slowly the group of seven-year-olds alighted around the stump and stared up at Sarah Cross, Tusk Force's regional educational co-ordinator, as she told them how the foot had recently been smuggled into Heathrow Airport.

One boy reached out to stroke the wrinkled grey hide and asked what the smuggler had wanted with such a thing. When Ms Cross explained that it would be sold as a wastepaper bin or an umbrella stand the children grimaced and stared at the video recording of an elephant herd making a noisy and magnificent entrance into a woodland clearing.

For the next hour the questions flew round the classroom of the St Bonaventure's Primary School in east Glasgow as Ms Cross displayed the rest of her horrific collection of trophies, recently seized by customs officers in this country. The children ran their hands along the metre-long elephant's tusk; they



Jungle story: Tusk Force presents the grim reality of poaching

pulled faces when told the bear paws were served up in soup as an Asian gastronomic treat. The most hideous exhibit was a capacious handbag made from an entire crocodile skin, complete with head.

Tusk Force believes the work it is doing in more than 10,000 British schools is as

important as any of its projects in the wild. "We have to educate the next generation to help us now or some of the species they see won't be around for as long as them," Ms Cross said.

"You have to explain that unless we change our ways the only place they might see

tigers, elephants and bears could be in the museums. The youngsters are more passionate about animals than most adults."

Unsurprisingly it is the statistics of slaughter the children best remember: half the 12 million elephant population wiped out in 30 years; fewer than

5,000 Siberian tigers left in the world, and only 11,000 black rhino. When Ms Cross asks how much poachers get for a rhino horn a chorus of voices reply: "£21,000 a kilo." Her next question was what poachers made out of ivory and an eight-year-old boy shouted back "an absolute fortune".

Tusk Force also teaches children about endangered species in their own backyard. "They knew about the otter, the golden eagle and the red squirrel but they were genuinely upset to learn that creatures like the dormouse, the water vole and the wildcat are in as much danger," Ms Cross said.

Tusk Force began its endangered species education programme in 1995 and saw it greeted with enormous enthusiasm by head teachers and school pupils. The charity has introduced a competition for children aged from 5 to 16 to devise their own project to protect wildlife.

"What must give us hope is that if the future of the world's endangered species were already in the hands of today's children the danger facing thousands of species would not be as critical as it is," Ms Cross said.

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BY GABRIELLA GAMINI, IN LIMA, AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

The 225 hostages — who included two Britons, Roger Church, 50, the deputy head of mission at the British Embassy, and David Griffith, 56, general manager of a Lima hotel — were freed unexpectedly early yesterday. They

The Red Cross said 140 men were still being held. The ambassadors from Japan, Malaysia, Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay are



The rebels seem to be a well-trained suicide squad. "The rooms are mined and the roof is mined. The building is a time bomb. Any rescue mission would cause a bloodbath," Señor Toledo said.

ruled out any deal with the guerrillas, so that the siege appears destined to become a gruelling affair.

Eduardo Marou, a Lima university lecturer who was among those freed, said most of the hostages spent their six days in captivity cleaning bathrooms and holding police

ical debates with their captors. Conditions were cramped with one 25-square-yard room holding approximately 50 people. Reading material was limited as most of it was in Japanese. The hostages slept in rows, with the guerrillas slumped into the corner to keep guard.



BY GABRIELLA GAMINI

Mr Griffith spoke of his "relief" at being released as he was driven from the Japanese prison.

Fellow hostages said Mr Griffith had been in charge of organising 50 men in one room. "David made sure tempers did not flare," said Francisco Sagasti, a Peruvian economist, who was also released.

FROM LEYLA LINTON IN BRUSSELS

Police investigating Belgium's child-sex and murder scandal raided the Institut's premises at Furchies-la-Marche, near Charleroi, at the weekend. More than 100 men and investigators spent more than eight hours there on Saturday night, searching and removing black magic ritual implements and daggers, swords, crucifixes and a refrigerator containing frozen blood.

Michel Bourlet, the public prosecutor, who yesterday visited the abandoned Jumet mineshaft where police believe Mr Dutroux may have hidden children or their bodies, refused to confirm a link between that case and the sect.

Gendarmes pumped water from a flooded chamber in the mine yesterday and will continue the search on Friday.

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THE WORLD'S BEST LEATHER VALUE FOR 21 YEARS

Foie gras imports feed Gallic spleen

FROM ADAM SAGE
IN PARIS

FRANCE'S traditional Christmas is under attack with cheap foie gras from Eastern Europe flooding the country's dinner tables and animal rights militants calling for a boycott of the product.

Producers of goose and duck liver say they are unable to compete with rivals from countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, which have flooded the French market in recent years.

They want the European Union to impose clear labelling, confident that French consumers will avoid products that they know to be foreign.

Foie gras is a traditional Christmas delicacy in France, where people appear to remain largely insensitive to the campaigns against it by animal rights activists. Despite newspaper advertisements urging a boycott because of the way geese and ducks are force-fed, demand has increased.

The French get through 10,000 tonnes of it a year, mostly at Christmas, when they pay Fr100 (£11.50) for a small tin in a supermarket and up to Fr750 for a terrine in a Parisian delicatessen.

"The activists have had only a minor effect in France and our sales have doubled over the last five years," said Serge Chambert, director of the Foie Gras Association in the Gers county, southwest France.

However, if the animal rights groups have failed to shake his confidence, the Hungarians, Bulgarians and Romanians appeared to have succeeded. About a fifth of the foie gras consumed in France is of Eastern European origin. But it is banned in France and described as French.

"It is 20 per cent cheaper than anything we produce and although we have brought down our prices, we will never be able to be competitive," M. Chambert said. "They have cheap labour and low taxes."

M. Chambert wants Brussels to make it illegal for Eastern European goose and duck livers to be labelled as French, even if they are processed in France.

The French Government, aware that any attack on foie gras is likely to be seen by voters as an assault on the Gallic way of life, is backing the producers' demand.

Yeltsin returns to Kremlin with goal of fitter economy

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN returned triumphantly to the Kremlin yesterday declaring that he was "ready for battle" and extending an invitation to John Major to visit Moscow in the new year.

After nearly half a year's absence from his Kremlin office, the Russian leader looked slow but steady as he emerged unassisted from a limousine and was greeted by his staff. In brief remarks to waiting journalists, he said he was confident that the lives of his countrymen would improve in the new year.

However, the Russian leader looked a shadow of the energetic figure who crisscrossed Russia during last summer's punishing election campaign, when he inspired the support of the people and secured his re-election.

On his first day back at the job, he received a 20-minute telephone call from Mr Major welcoming him back to work. Mr Yeltsin asked the Prime Minister to Russia next year, an invitation which he has already extended to President Clinton, Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, and President Chirac.

While his telephone discussion on foreign policy issues may help to reassure Western powers that the Kremlin leader is firmly back in power, the real test will be his ability to tackle pressing domestic problems.

Mr Yeltsin has made it clear that his priority is to resolve the country's economic and social ills, underscoring yesterday by figures revealing that Russia's gross domestic product had shrunk another 6 per cent this year.

He has also committed himself to defusing the crisis in the military and criticism of the way the country was run during his absence, directed particularly at Anatoli Chubais, head of the Kremlin administration.

Within hours the Russian leader was on the receiving end of opposition gibes, largely halted during his prolonged sickness. Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader who stood against him in July's elections, said the Krem-

lin leader was in no condition to deal with any of the problems affecting the country today. "Even when he was healthy and sober, he could not come up with an answer to any of the issues facing Russia," Mr Zyuganov said.

The President's doctors remained confident, however, that in spite of his shaky appearance yesterday the Russian leader will soon be back to strength and can expect to lead a normal working life for years to come.

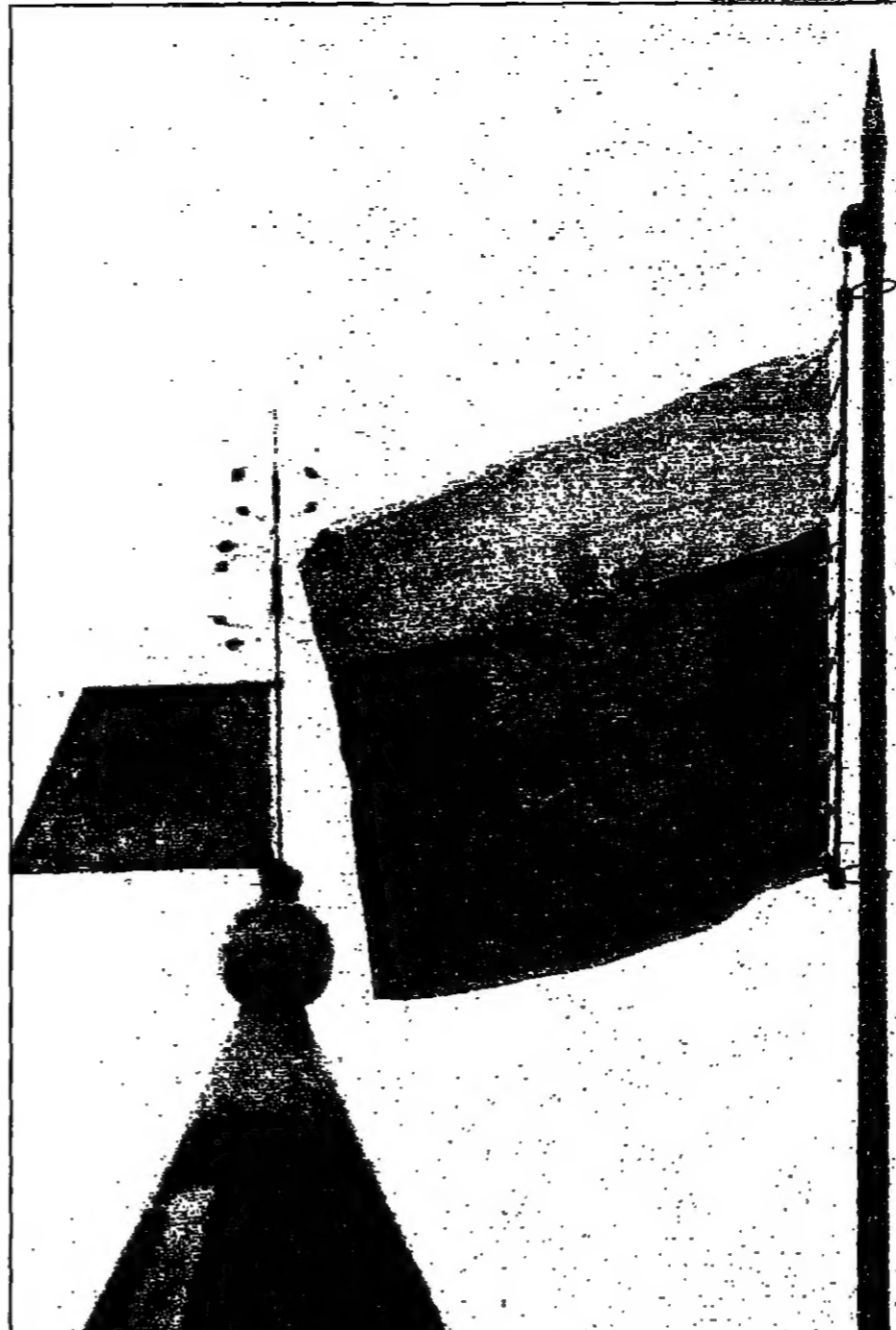
Michael DeBakey, the pioneering American heart doctor who advised on the multiple bypass operation, said Mr Yeltsin should be able to work an eight-hour day and be back to full strength within a month or two.

"I wrote him a personal note recently that, on the basis of our experience, there is no reason why he should not be able to live a normal life, including working, for the next ten years," the heart surgeon told the BBC. "His heart condition is now virtually normal."

Ship blaze: One crew member was killed when a fire broke out on board a nuclear-powered Russian icebreaker yesterday. Tass said the shipping company reported that the nuclear reactor powering the ship was not affected by the fire and there was no radiation leak. (Reuters)



Mr Yeltsin yesterday: confident of progress



The presidential flag is raised at the Kremlin yesterday to welcome back Boris Yeltsin

Nine die in fire at hospital

Hamburg: Nine German women died in a fire that destroyed a psychiatric hospital dormitory in the small north German town of Rickling, police said yesterday.

The patients who died late on Sunday were aged between 55 and 85. Police said arson could not be ruled out. At first it was thought that only two people had been killed, but seven more bodies were discovered yesterday in the smouldering remains of the building.

Twenty-three people who lived in the wooden hospital were rescued from the building safely. (Reuters)

Hutus arrested over genocide

Ngara, Tanzania: The Rwandan authorities have arrested at least 300 of the 340,000 Hutu refugees who returned from Tanzania this month, UN officials said.

A UN official said the refugees were arrested in connection with the 1994 genocide of about 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus. A Hutu refugee lobby group, the Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy to Rwanda, denounced the "false allegations". (Reuters)

Bonino voted top European

Brussels: Emma Bonino, 48, was voted European of the Year (Leyla Linton writes). The jury said she showed "courage, determination and great strength of character" as EU Commissioner for Fisheries, Humanitarian Aid and Consumer Policy. She is noted for backing Spanish fishermen against the British and advocating and practising abortion. The award is organised by La Vie, a French Roman Catholic magazine.



Bonino: backs Spanish

Mutineers hold leader over truce

Bangui: Army mutineers in the Central African Republic have detained Captain Anicet Savetier, their leader, for signing a deal extending a truce in Bangui, the capital, by one month. Elsewhere, hundreds of residents in rebel strongholds in the city's southern districts marched to demand a quick and permanent end to the mutiny that has disrupted their lives. (Reuters)

Singer collapses at White House

Washington: Tony Bennett, 70, the singer, was in good condition in hospital after suffering an erupted hernia at a White House dinner given by President and Mrs Clinton. Mr Bennett, who is enjoying a career revival, has won six Grammys. His best-known hit is *I Left My Heart in San Francisco*.

Killer's fortune goes to victims

Sydney: Martin Bryant, 28, jailed for life for murdering 35 people in Port Arthur, Tasmania, last April, has had all his assets seized by court order (Roger Maynard writes). The proceeds of the \$500,000 estate are to be paid to the injured and relatives of the dead.

France faces double threat from guerrilla bombers

BY ADAM SAGE

THE twin terrorist threat facing France was underlined yesterday when police broke up an Islamic fundamentalist "military" cell and Corsican nationalists were blamed for a bomb explosion in Paris.

French police expect attacks by both groups over Christmas. Corsican militants last week declared "war" on Paris, while today is the second anniversary of the hijacking of a French airliner by Muslim extremists, a date detectives believe could signal a fresh wave of violence.

Yesterday investigators said they had found evidence that ten people arrested last week belonged to a "network of Islamic gunmen trained abroad", notably in Afghanistan. Although there is no evidence to suggest any of the ten were involved in the Paris Metro bombing which killed four people this month, detec-

tives said they have links to known terrorists. Seized documents detail the extensive military training received by the young Muslim militants.

The ten were charged with involvement in terrorism by the Paris-based investigating judge, Jean-Louis Bruguière. Their arrest represents a significant success for police in the fight to prevent a wave of terror attacks in France for the second year running. A campaign by three Islamic cells left eight dead and scores injured in 1995.

Detectives believe the fundamentalists could be planning to plant another bomb today to mark the anniversary of the Marseilles Air France hijacking, which ended when police stormed the plane.

However, they are also concerned at the increasingly violent tactics of the Corsican group, the FLNC Canal

Historique, which is seeking the island's independence. The movement attacked mainland France for the first time this year.

Legal authorities said it was probably responsible for the explosion that damaged the National Institute of Statistics in Paris yesterday. If so, it would mark an escalation in the Corsican troubles, as the movement has so far avoided bombing Paris.

The upsurge in violence follows the French Government's decision earlier this year to break off talks with the nationalists after President Chirac called for a crackdown on Corsican terrorism.

Last week the movement's leader, François Santoni, and his partner, Marie-Hélène, were arrested, prompting the group to issue a statement saying: "The police can consider themselves at war."



Soros: this year he gave \$350 million to charity

Soros tops roster of charitable elite

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

GEORGE SOROS, the financier and "failed philosopher" who forced the devaluation of the pound in 1992, was named yesterday as America's most generous philanthropist.

Mr Soros, who manages billions of dollars of offshore funds, topped a list of 25 leading charitable givers prepared by *Fortune* magazine, giving away about \$350 million (£215 million) this year. The causes included Internet access in Russia, the defence of immigrants' rights in America, and getting two US states to back the use of marijuana as a medicine.

Fortune said all but four of the top 25 philanthropists were self-made men. Most attributed their generosity to their religious background. Second on the list was L. S. Skaggs, 73, the retired chairman of the American Stores retail chain, who donated \$155 million. Next was Bill Gates, 41, the chairman of Microsoft, the computer software giant, and America's richest man, who gave \$135 million.

Earlier this year Ted Turner, founder of Cable News Network, accused many Americans of being selfish, saying they should be more interested in topping a list of philanthropists than of billionaires. He was 16th on *Fortune's* list, giving away \$28 million.

Jesse Jackson leads attack on teaching blacks 'slang talk'

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE Rev Jesse Jackson has attacked a Californian decision to recognise "black English" as a separate language to be taught in schools. In a televised debate at the weekend, he called the move "an unacceptable surrender bordering on disgrace".

Last week's vote by the Oakland Unified School District to make Black English — or Ebonics — the official first language of most of its black children has triggered heated national argument. If anything, black leaders are more angered than white by what they see as an attempt to link sloppy speech and poor classroom results to roots in West Africa and slavery.

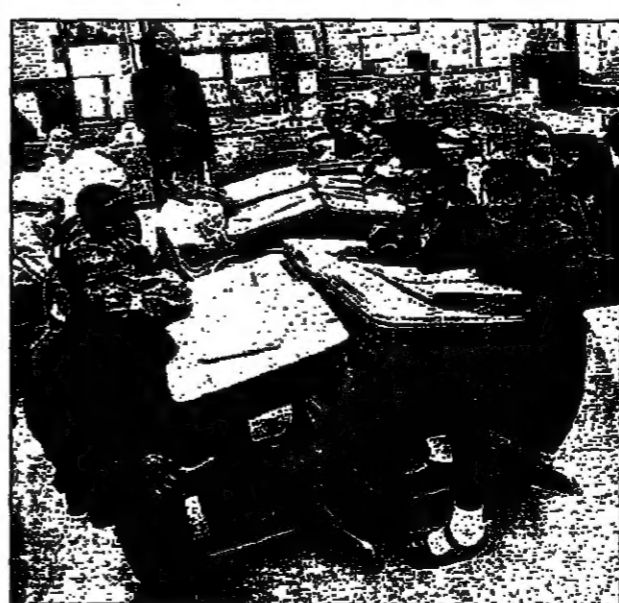
"I understand the attempt to reach out to these children," Mr Jackson said on NBC at the weekend, referring to some 20,000 black youngsters in Oakland held back by low school grades. But allowing them to read and write in their street vernacular amounted to "teaching down to our children, and it must never happen".

Later he issued a statement welcoming genuine moves to increase blacks' access to edu-

cation and jobs but adding, in even stronger language: "In Oakland some madness has taken over, making slang talk a second language. You don't have to go to school to learn to talk garbage."

Maya Angelou, the renowned black poet and novelist, who is a close friend of the Clinton family, has also weighed into the debate. "I'm incensed," she told a Kansas newspaper. "The very idea that African-American language is a language separate and apart is very threatening, because it can encourage young men and women not to learn standard English."

Dismayed by persistent underachievement by black children, who make up 57 per cent of Oakland's schools, officials there adopted a notion popular in some academic circles that the patois of America's black inner-city areas has more in common with West African tribal languages than with standard English. They voted unanimously that Ebonics (from "ebony" and "phonics") was a distinct language, and denied charges that the vote was a ploy to qualify for extra federal funds.



Tatiana Johnson, right, reads to her classmates at Parker Elementary School in Oakland, California

Pressure grows on contrite Gingrich

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

CRITICISM was growing yesterday over the Republican rush to re-elect Newt Gingrich as Speaker despite his contrite admission that he broke the House of Representatives' ethics rules.

Party leaders may succeed in persuading rank-and-file Congress members that they still owe allegiance to Mr Gingrich for leading their return to power two years ago.

Already one of the most unpopular politicians in the United States, Mr Gingrich, who had promised to transform the political landscape through aggressive promotion of his *Contract With America*, would, if re-elected, become a weakened figure even within the confines of Capitol Hill. His presence would cast a shadow over Republican attempts to go after President Clinton and other Democrats for a shoal of presumed ethics violations involving campaign

financing. Already, wrangling over his future is undercutting post-election promises by both parties to try to get along.

The January 7 vote for Mr Gingrich will be the first in the new Congress by House Republicans who, for all their solidarity, worry about the reaction of voters. However, no one has emerged in the party to challenge him.

All the fury is being expressed by Democrats who think he should resign over the ethics committee finding that he brought discredit on the House over his handling of tax-exempt funds for a partisan, televised college course, and his admission that he misled the committee with "inaccurate, incomplete and unreliable information".

"We don't need people in the Speaker's chair who lied to Congress," said David Bonior, the Democratic Whip leading the campaign to oust him.

Not-so-perfect tense on Dordogne bar-owner's menu

BY ADAM SAGE

A LINGUISTIC nightmare is facing students of French after a campaign to reinstate one of the most complex points of Gallic grammar, the imperfect subjunctive.

Launched earlier this year, the Committee for the Rehabilitation and Use of the Preterite and the Imperfect Subjunctive — Corpuis — has tapped into a groundswell of opinion in favour of a return to mind-bogglingly difficult conjugations.

As a result, decades of increasing simplicity are in danger of being overturned, to the delight of purists but the consternation of anyone hoping to learn French. Alain

Bouissière, the founder of Corpuis, says his committee has attracted several hundred members, including journalists, teachers and academics, in little more than six months. He believes his success heralds the comeback of verbs ending in "isse", "asse" and "ûre" — all forms that have largely been consigned to history.

An avid reader of French 19th-century literature and the owner of a Dordogne bar, M. Bouissière, 50, has been surprised at the committee's meteoric rise since May. He offered an impromptu lesson on the imperfect subjunctive on his bar's terrace this autumn and was taken aback when almost 200 people turned up. "Many people don't want to lose

something that is part of our cultural heritage," he said. "We have a very rich language that has been left to us by our ancestors and we must preserve it."

The popularity of his cause owes much to France's preoccupation with stopping the steady stream of English words seeping into the French language. This has given rise to a large number of associations whose aim is to defend *le français* wherever they believe it is under attack.

Most blame Anglo-Saxon imperialism, but not M. Bouissière, who sees the main threat as his country's media. "Television presenters use 'very rudimentary language', he says, while journalism courses ban

the preterite in favour of the perfect tense. Reporters are taught to say "J'ai vu" (I have seen) rather than "Je vis" (I saw). "There are so many nuances that are lost in this way," M. Bouissière said.

The preterite is ignored by an overwhelming majority of French people because of the difficulties in conjugating it. But those pale beside the imperfect subjunctive. So complex are the verb endings in that tense that the French Government passed legislation in 1901 allowing people to use the present subjunctive instead, if they were stuck. M. Bouissière says this law, coupled with latter-day media laziness, has put one of the French language's

finest forms at risk of extinction. "People under 30 don't even know what the imperfect subjunctive is," he said. Indeed, today numerous French speakers have discarded the subjunctive — meant to signal that an action is doubtful, possible or desired, whether present or imperfect: they use the present tense.

For example, many would mistakenly say: "Il faudrait que vous alliez" ("You should go") — present tense. Under the 1901 law, they could say: "Il faudrait que vous alliez" — present subjunctive. M. Bouissière and his growing army of purists demand that they say: "Il faudrait que vous alliez" — imperfect subjunctive.

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A home at last for Costel



Costel, with his parents, Roger and Tara Hughes. "This is the first proper Christmas Costel has known," says Tara, "so we have tried to make it special for him. We have bought him clothes and toys and a multimedia learning kit to help his education"



Tara Hughes encountered baby Costel in a Romanian orphanage in March 1994. Now after a long struggle she has adopted him and he is in his new home for Christmas. Interview by Jason Cowley

The child who greets you at the door is small, frail but full of laughter. His parents, Roger and Tara Hughes, watch as he builds a tower of plastic bricks, then 'knocks it over with his hands, the bricks tumbling at his feet. Costel Hughes is three-and-a-half, but he seems much younger. There is something impossibly vulnerable about him. "He has only been walking for six

weeks," Tara says.

The family are preparing for their first Christmas together — 12 months ago Costel was living in a Romanian orphanage. Tara had filed for adoption but, mired in the bureaucracy and labyrinthine politics of post-Ceausescu Romania, she did not know when, or if, she would ever be able to bring Costel home with her.

"I remember 12 months ago crying my eyes out during Christmas dinner — the thought of Costel being stuck in an orphanage, while we celebrated Christmas, was too painful. But this year is different — it is the first proper Christmas he has known, so we have tried to make it special for him. We have bought him clothes and toys, but also a multimedia learning kit to help his education, and a blackboard, which he will have to stand up to use. This should help strengthen his legs."

Tara, 29, began visiting Romania in February 1992, two years after the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu. Like many thousands of ordinary people, she responded to the suffering of that country's abandoned children, with their shaven heads and blank stares. For a time, in the early 1990s, it seemed that nearly every school charity event or church fete was in aid of the Romanian orphans.

A busy, self-employed hairdresser (she received spirited support from her colleagues at her salon in Blackheath), she spent her holidays helping at an orphanage in Dărmănești, a small, remote village in the north of the country.

"Working through the Biggin Hill Romanian Relief group and later Bless the Children, I raised sponsorship money to help to fund my trips," she says. "When I first arrived in Romania, I couldn't believe how bad things were. The orphanage itself was absolutely horrendous."

"There was no sanitation, no fresh water and the hygiene was appalling. There were rows and rows of young children in cots, squashed together like little sardines. Many of them were lying in their own faeces. There were times when I couldn't believe what I was seeing, or wanted to."

Her eyes water a little as she remembers. "I cannot forget the smell of the place, it was so overpowering. It hit you as soon as you walked in. All the children were suffering from malnutrition; the only food they had was a kind of gritty gruel. They were also distressed, rocking to and fro, banging themselves against the bars of their cots."

There was also the threat of Aids. "Quite a few of the children I saw had Aids and others were HIV-positive. I saw at least four babies die from Aids."

The problem was made worse by the practice of taking blood from big, healthy babies to give to the weaker ones. "Of course, the same needles tended to be used on each occasion, spreading the virus."

Tara encountered Costel on her third visit to Dărmănești in March 1994. He was lying alone in his cot, weakened by dysentery and malnutrition.

"Because he looked so lost and tiny, I used to give him extra food and a cuddle. He'd pull away from most people but never did with me. He used to follow me with his eyes as I walked around, and crane his head forward as I left the room. I could tell that a bond was developing between us."

Returning home to Kent, Tara found herself unable to forget Costel, or the conditions in which he was living. She spoke to her husband, Roger, 32, about adopting the boy. Although they were recently married and able to have their own children, he agreed, visiting Dărmănești with his wife for the first time in August 1995. Roger says: "I wanted to do everything I could to help Tara. I saw how the problems in Romania were affecting her. Some people keep asking why we did it. But as soon as they meet Costel they understand. There is no way we could have left him alone."

Researching into Costel's background, Tara discovered that he was abandoned by his mother when just eight weeks old. She lived in a neighbouring village but had no wish to see her son. At 32, she already had more children than she could cope with.

"I went to see her to seek her permission to adopt Costel. She looked like an old woman. Her life had defeated her and any

suspiciousness of the Romanian people brought about by nearly half a century of state terror. The secret police, the Securitate, infiltrated every aspect of Romanian life; it was not uncommon for members of the same family to betray each other to the authorities. The failed attempt by a British couple, Adrian and Bernadette Mooney, to smuggle a Romanian child out of the country in August 1994 had created difficulties.

"The problems with the Mooneys made the Romanian authorities even more suspicious than they usually are," Tara says. "They did not believe our motives were pure. They could not understand why we wanted to take this child out of the country, especially when children were so cheaply regarded."

"They seemed to put so many obstacles in our way. There was so much red tape and paperwork. Costel was even moved to another orphanage in Ornești (a half-hour car journey from Dărmănești), which, though cleaner, was like a prison in terms of security; it took about three hours to get in the first time because they didn't know who we were."

Tara eventually arrived home with Costel on July 27 this year, more than two years after first finding him. She spent the previous two months living in a rented flat in Ornești. The uncertainty almost broke her, especially as she had only rudimentary Romanian. Money was an endless difficulty, too: the overall cost of the adoption was £12,000; the couple are still paying off a loan.

"I was staying in a small flat on my own and in the most abject conditions. I didn't know if I was going to be allowed to take Costel home with me or not. Then one afternoon when I went to see him I was told that I could 'take him away'. We lived together in the flat until the adoption papers came through."

Costel's adoption is official under Romanian law, but he is not yet a British citizen. "He must live in this country for 12 months before we can apply for British citizenship. God willing, that should be the final step we have to face."

She describes the feeling of being reunited with Roger and her parents, John and Pat Werner ("my greatest supporters"), at Heathrow as the best moment of her life. "Walking through customs with Costel I felt exhilarated, exhausted, vindicated... there has been nothing to compare in my life, not even walking down the aisle on my wedding day."

Under the close attention of his new parents, Costel has bloomed. In five months he has grown an inch, put on half a stone and begun eating solids for the first time. Where before he could neither speak nor walk, he can now do both. He has also shaken off the alopecia which left his hair thin and balding. His mother has just given him his first haircut, a thick wedge with a neat fringe.

To watch Costel as he plays in front of the Christmas tree, clearly enchanted by the colours and light, it is hard to imagine what he must have suffered. "He still has nightmares, but he is getting stronger each day," Tara says.

"We love him so much and pray that he can forget what happened to him and lead a normal, healthy life. My only regret, as we prepare for Christmas, is for the children we left behind."



Suffering: Costel in the Romanian orphanage

interest she might once have had in Costel had gone. She didn't seem to mind what happened to him. It was as if he had pushed him out of her mind; as if he didn't exist."

Costel's mother was a casualty of Nicolae Ceausescu's mission to create a population of fertile, capable women, bare foot and pregnant in the totalitarian kitchen.

He launched his repressive pro-natalist campaign in 1984, even though women constituted approximately half of the official labour force, being concentrated chiefly in the agricultural sector.

As a result, contraception was almost impossible to obtain, especially in the impoverished north, and abortion was illegal for any woman who had borne fewer than five children. Backstreet abortions were available but dangerous — medically and politically.

The adoption process was long and tortuous. It was not helped by the inherent

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The Times survival guide to last-minute Christmas

FOOD AND DRINK
This includes turkey, goose, champagne, cranberry sauce, puddings and Christmas lunch

LONDON
Turkey: Marks & Spencer (7.30am-5pm); Asda (overnight until 6pm); Sainsbury (7.30am-5pm); Harrods (9am-5pm)
Goose: Asda, Safeway (overnight until 6pm)
Champagne: all major supermarkets
Cranberry sauce: all major supermarkets
Christmas pudding: all major supermarkets
Christmas lunch: Windows of the World, the rooftop restaurant at the London Hilton on Park Lane, still has spaces available for Christmas day. Lunch costs £112 for three-course lunch plus office; three-course dinner plus coffees costs £82. Details on 0171-493 8000; The Red Fort restaurant in Soho is offering a £50-a-head Indian feast for lunch or dinner on Christmas day. Details on 47 2115.

MANCHESTER
Turkey: Marks & Spencer (open 7am-5pm); Tesco (8am-6pm); Asda (7.30am-6pm); Safeway (7.30am-6pm)
Goose: Safeway (7.30am-6pm)
Champagne: M&S, Tesco, Asda, Safeway (opening times as above)
Cranberry sauce: M&S, Tesco, Asda, Safeway
Christmas pudding: M&S, Tesco, Asda, Safeway
Christmas lunch: Ramada 865 still available for small families

CARDIFF
Turkey: M&S, Queen St (7am-5pm); Sainsbury, Colchester Av. Roath (7.30am-6pm); Asda, Pontprennau (8am-5pm); Safeway, Llanishen (7.30am-5pm)
Goose: None
Champagne: M&S, Queen St; Sainsbury, Colchester Av. Roath; Asda, Pontprennau; Safeway, Llanishen (opening times as for turkey)
Cranberry sauce: M&S, Queen St; Asda, Pontprennau; Safeway, Llanishen
Christmas pudding: M&S, Queen St; Asda, Pontprennau; Safeway, Llanishen
Christmas lunch: all fully booked or closed

EXETER
Turkey: M&S (7am-5pm); Tesco (8am-6pm); Sainsbury (7.30am-6pm)
Goose: M&S; Tesco; Sainsbury
Champagne: M&S; Sainsbury; Tesco
Cranberry sauce: M&S; Tesco; Sainsbury
Christmas pudding: M&S; Tesco; Sainsbury
Christmas lunch: all fully booked or closed

BRISTOL
Turkey: M&S, Broadmead (7am-5pm); Tesco, Broadmead (8am-6pm); Sainsbury, Clifton Down (7.30am-6pm); Asda, Bedminster (7.30am-6pm); Safeway, Fishponds (7am-5pm); Sainsbury, Clifton Down; Asda, Bedminster; Safeway, Fishponds
Champagne: all major supermarkets
Cranberry sauce: Tesco, Broadmead; Sainsbury, Clifton Down; Asda, Bedminster; Safeway, Fishponds
Christmas pudding: Tesco, Broadmead; Sainsbury, Clifton Down; Asda, Bedminster; Safeway, Fishponds
Christmas lunch: all well-known restaurants fully booked

ABERDEEN
Turkey: M&S (8.30-5pm); Presto, Union St (3.30am-6.30pm)
Goose: None
Champagne: M&S; Presto Union St



Don't panic: there's still plenty of opportunity to buy and stuff your turkey and have a glass of champagne with the family

Cranberry sauce: M&S; Presto Union St
Christmas pudding: M&S; Presto Union St
Christmas lunch: Stakis Tretoops, a few places left (01224 313377)

ABERDEEN
(Buzz Lightyear sold out; Barbie, Trivial Pursuit, Risk, Monopoly and Pictionary)

LONDON
Toys and games: Hamleys, 188 Regent St. W1 (9am-6pm); Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (9am-5pm); Toys R Us, Brent Cross Shopping Centre, Tilling Rd, NW2 (7.30am-6pm)

MANCHESTER
Toys: Buzz Lightyear not available; Barbie at Toys R Us
Games: Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit and Risk, all at Kendals. Pictionary not available

CARDIFF
Toys: Barbie limited at Beatties, Castle St (9am-5pm) and Toys R Us (7.30am-6pm)
Games: Monopoly and Trivial Pursuit and Risk available at Toys R Us

EXETER
Toys: Pram and Toy Shop, Sidwell St (10am-5pm)
Games: Pram and Toy Shop, Trivial Pursuit and Risk sold out

BRISTOL
Toys and games: Toys R Us has Monopoly and Barbie, everything else sold out (7.30am-6pm)

ABERDEEN
Toys and games: Woolworths and Toys R Us. Trivial Pursuit and Pictionary sold out

LONDON
Women's partywear: Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, SW1 (10am-5pm); Laura Ashley, 256-258 Regent St. W1 (10am-3pm); Jigsaw, 31 Brompton

Rd, SW3 (10.30am-5pm, or longer depending on demand)
Men's partywear: Paul Smith, 41 Floral Street, WC2 (10.30am-5pm); Cecil Gee, 122 Bond Street, W1 (9.30am-3.30pm longer depending on demand); Jigsaw Menswear, 9 Floral Street, WC2 (10am-4pm)
Party shoes: Russell & Bromley, 109 New Bond St (10am-4pm); Emma Hope's Shoes, 33 Amwell St EC1 (10am-2pm); Charles Jourdan, 39 Brompton Road SW3 (10am-4.30pm)

MANCHESTER
Women's and men's partywear and shoes: Kendals (8.30am-5pm)

CARDIFF
Women's partywear: Howells (8.30am-5pm); Next (9am-5pm)
Men's partywear: Dinner jacket hire from Moss Bros (9am-5pm); Dunn & Co (9am-5.30pm)
Party shoes: Howells; Dunn & Co

EXETER
Women's partywear: La Bella Moda, Princesshay
Men's partywear: Peter Gardner; dinner jacket hire from Jonathan Hawkes, Harlequin Centre
Party shoes: Elizabeth Ann, Cathedral Close

BRISTOL
Women's and men's partywear and party shoes: very little available

ABERDEEN
Women's and men's partywear and party shoes: shops in Bon Accord shopping centre (9am-5.30pm); all hiring shops closed unless you have an appointment

TRAVEL

(Holidays and car hire)

LONDON
Holidays: British Airways has availability on many flights departing on Christmas Day, although these may be in Club or Upper Class. Destinations include New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, Johannesburg, Barbados and Jamaica. Details on 0345 222111 (24 hrs); Virgin Atlantic still has seats available on Christmas Day flights to Florida and Hong Kong. Details on 01293 747747 (6.45am-10pm today, 9am-2pm Christmas Day). Car hire: Eurodollar has limited availability from Heathrow. Details on 0181-897 3322 (24 hrs); However, Luton airport is a possible late option if that fails.

MANCHESTER
Holidays: Thomas Cook holidays to Tenerife available and limited Christmas Eve flights. Car hire: Budget, Avis and Euro-car

CARDIFF
Holidays: none available
Car hire: all cars already booked

EXETER
Holidays: A T Mays, South Street, only holiday available self-catering in Tenerife or Mexico, flights from Manchester
Car hire: Avis and Euro-car, plenty of choice; Budget, low availability

BRISTOL
Holidays: All major travel agents closed
Car hire: Hertz, good choice (8.30am-4pm)

ABERDEEN
Holidays and cars: nothing available

Wise men and the art of buying Christmas gifts

As another December 25 tiptoes towards us, we once again find ourselves lost in deep, spiritual thought about the many mysteries of Christmas, particularly why women make such a big song and dance about buying presents.

Knowing how much women enjoy browsing in Bond Street we men even let them buy presents for our side of the family. And you know what? They still moan. What's more, we selfishly beguile this fun activity even though we know in our heart of hearts that women aren't all that brilliant at buying really interesting, unusual presents for their relatives and friends. Partly this is because when it comes to the annual ritual of Christmas presents, many women take off from a very long runway: they start thinking about Christmas presents (and begin drawing up shopping lists) in August, which robs them of the inventiveness that comes with the adrenalin rush of chasing a deadline.

When I mention this failing to some women, they ask "What on earth are you talking about?" in what is clearly a genuine tone of inquiry and search for guidance. So I explain a woman thinks of Aunt Marjorie and remembers that she enjoys needlepoint, wears Guerlain scent and buys her jumpers at Marks & Spencer, so this woman, thinking "logically", buys her some embroidery thread, or a Guerlain eau de Cologne, or an M&S jumper. Men leave it to Christmas Eve, in order to ensure that they allow their adrenalin-fired imagination no lazy



SIGN OF THE TIMES

by Joe Joseph

slack, and then they conclude: "Why pigeonhole Aunt Marjorie? Maybe she aches to try a new hobby if only people would stop buying her embroidery thread; or maybe a quilt of Estee Lauder or a Prada jumper?" Then we make it our Christmas mission to inject a little novelty into Aunt Marjorie's life by buying her a small tub of yacht-deck matt varnish, which happens to be available from the ship chandlery next to the office on the way to St Katharine's Dock.

Having spawned and then clinically executed this brainwave, many men naturally return home with Aunt Marjorie's trophy expecting at least a small thank-you from the woman of the house. Instead they are met with the blinkered phrase: "What on earth is your Aunt Marjorie - who wouldn't know a yacht from a yashmak - going to do with a tub of varnish? And what happened to the other seven presents you agreed to buy?" It is at such moments that men don't even bother trying to explain the difference between quality and quantity: women wouldn't understand. This is why many wise men,

as the years pass, have learnt to bite their lip and leave all the Christmas present-buying to women, who possess such butterfly-hopping brains that they are quite capable of thinking simultaneously of 11 different presents that they have to buy - and actually buying them - before picking up a few groceries on the way home. Sometimes, of course, women realise that they have bitten off more than they can chew, at which point they will go to extraordinary lengths to hand back the present-buying responsibility to men - even if it means getting hugely pregnant, which they say makes it tricky to manoeuvre around Harrods (but not if you are thoughtful enough to hire them a wheelchair).

Men - not allowed to shop, but nevertheless being responsible adults - naturally shoulder some of the other duties in order to share the burdens of the Christmas season. They will, for example, telephone the butcher to order the turkey and even leave the butcher their wife's telephone number so he can call her back later and finalise details of what kind, and size,

of turkey the family wants this year.

Men will also, selflessly, spend hours in Oddbins and Majestic worrying themselves stupid about which wines to buy, and about how many cases of Pilsner will be required to see the wife and children through the Boxing Day sporting fixtures on telly. Another thing: men will - without even being asked - offer judgment on whether or not the trimming of the Christmas tree is an improvement over last year's trendy Mexican red chillies theme.

Men are also sensitive enough to realise that a woman's nerves can jangle at this time of year. They know that sometimes it takes a very small straw to break the camel's back, such as when she asks you if you have bought the present for your nephew Jamie, as agreed.

Considerate as ever, and reluctant to push her over the edge, you naturally don't tell her baldly that you haven't bought it yet because she will only say something she'll regret, such as "But it's Christmas Eve, you wombat, and the shops are all closed now!"

So, keeping your own counsel, you just tiptoe to the Christmas tree (Ah! Spirals of dried orange peel! Much better than last year's, dear) and pick a present that some friends dropped round at the weekend for your son, but which he hasn't yet spotted, then rip off the tag and write "For Jamie" on it. Why? Because new men are ecologically minded and believe in recycling in all corners of our lives. Sensitive or what?

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■ VISUAL ART

Image of the year: Bill Viola's *The Messenger* in Durham Cathedral will long haunt the imagination



■ RADIO

Edwina Currie plays the title-role as politicians ham their way through *Iolanthe*

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ MUSIC

Hallelujah! Handel's *Messiah* still pulls in the crowds on its Christmas appearances



■ BOXING DAY

Anthony Hopkins in *Surviving Picasso*, and all the other new films, reviewed by Geoff Brown

"REMARKABLE..."

Hopkins brings tremendous power to the role."

— Sheridan Morley, BBC RADIO 2

"A magnificent moving experience... totally mesmerising."

— Charlotte Moore, EFL

"DAZZLING, DARING, VIGOROUSLY INVENTIVE"

— N.Y. TIMES

ANTHONY
HOPKINS

Surviving
PICASSO

15



Message of hope

For Richard Cork, Bill Viola's superb artwork in Durham Cathedral was a highlight of 1996

When medieval art was at its height in Britain, churches and cathedrals were the natural home for the finest painting and sculpture of the period. The smashing and burning perpetrated by Henry VIII and his Protestant successors ensured that pitifully little now remains. We are forced to search for vandalised fragments in the shadows of nave, transepts and choir. They provide only a bruised and abraded hint of the images that once played such an integral part in the architecture they enhanced. And attempts by 20th-century clergy to commission new religious art have ended, all too often, in excruciating banality.

The *Messenger*, Bill Viola's video installation in Durham Cathedral, stays in my mind as one of the most heartening works I encountered in 1996. Initiated by the cathedral's senior chaplain, Bill Hall, as part of the celebrations of the UK Year of the Visual Arts, it proved against the odds that contemporary art in a hallowed setting can vie with the intensity of its medieval forerunners.

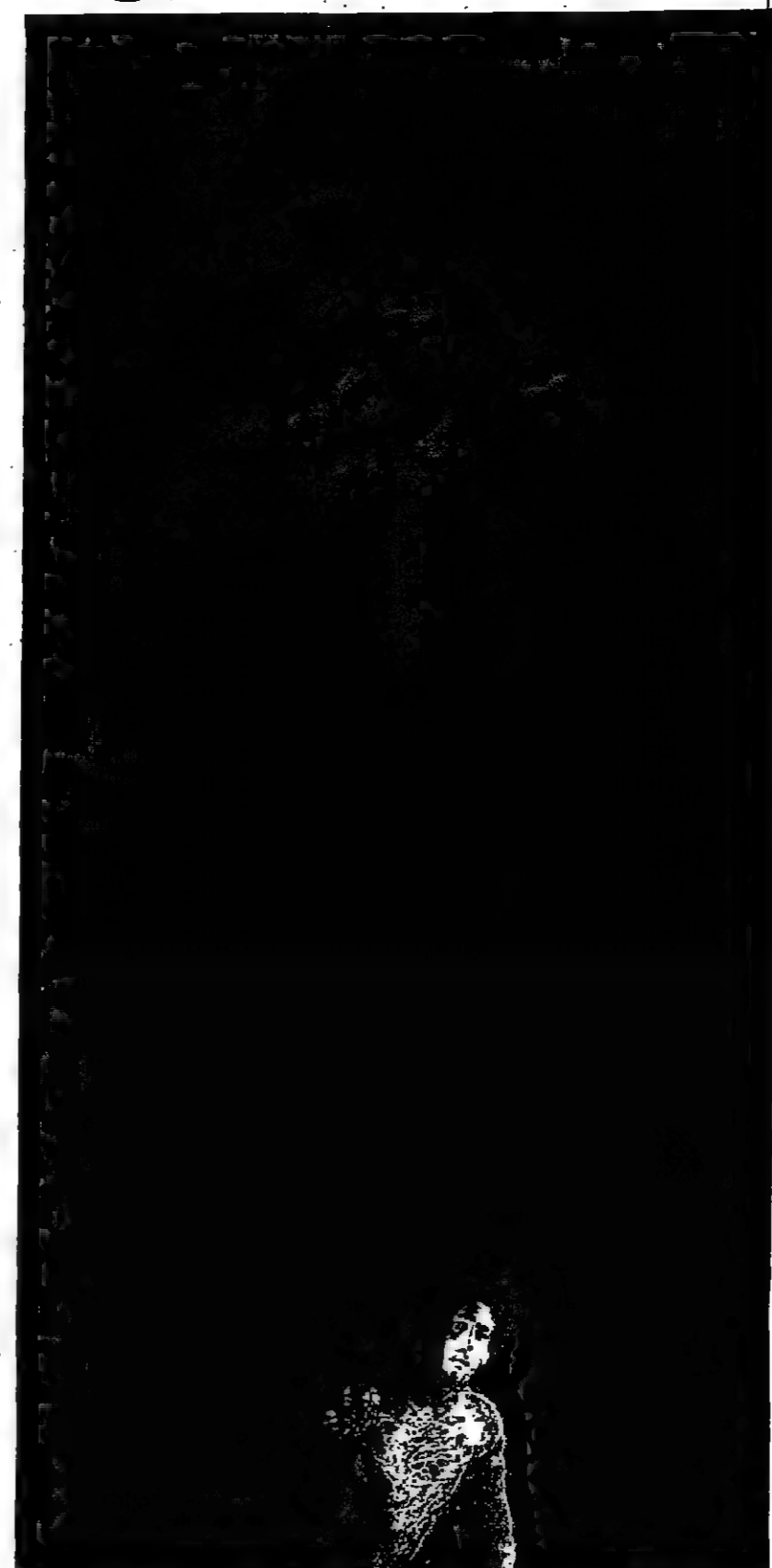
Few of the images which once embellished this sublime building now survive. The great Neville Screen in Caen stone behind the High Altar, given by Lord Neville around 1380, was originally enlivened by 107 richly gilded and painted statues. Only a few of its smallest and most incidental carvings have been spared, and the profusion of empty niches is painful to contemplate. Moreover, at the centre of this same chapel an elaborate embroidered frontal on the altar exemplifies everything wrong with church embellishment today. Designed by Leonard Childs and funded by the Friends of the Cathedral in 1994, it looks garish and unworthy of this austere setting.

Not so Viola's installation, which focuses unapologetically on the full-length figure of a naked man. Viola's decision to dispense with the statutory loin-cloth prompted the Dean to consult the police. But pornography plays no part in the image of a pale, submerged body projected on to the large screen. Positioned below a fine stained-glass window at the cathedral's riverside end, and framed by an arch, the screen was attached to the Great West Door. The utter simplicity of Viola's image chimed with the monumental severity of its Romanesque surroundings.

When the work commences, it does not strain for grandiose effect. The figure is scarcely discernible at first. He seems little more than a small, wavering blur illuminated by a diagonal shaft of ice-blue light streaming in from the right. Gradually, we realise that the blue-black emptiness around him is water.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, this inert and anonymous man becomes more identifiable as he rises upwards. Bubbles gush from his head like stars spinning out of control in the night sky. He looks more dead than alive, and submits limply to the force of the water. Then, quite suddenly, he breaks through. As his body hits the air and the warmth of a brighter light, the man's gasping relief appears to be mixed with a rush of pleasure. The colour washing over one side of his body is as heady as the brilliant drapery in a Mannerist altarpiece by Pontorno, a painter whom Viola particularly admires. Memories are stirred of the dead Christ in a thousand Deposition scenes.

Although video is Viola's medium, he



Modern art complements the medieval in a hallowed setting: a scene from *The Messenger*, Bill Viola's video installation in Durham Cathedral

remains profoundly indebted to the European tradition of figure painting. But he does not seek to impose a religious meaning on *The Messenger*. The floating form is impossible to identify with confidence as Christ, even when we watch his bearded face release a long-held breath. The sound of pent-up air rushing from his mouth echoes through the cathedral. And for a moment, *The Messenger* seems to be unequivocally concerned with the promise of rebirth.

But rather than moving towards a Lazarus-like emergence from the void, the figure finally inhales as deeply as possible, closes his eyes and sinks back into the darkness. The smaller he becomes, the more he sheds his human identity, breaking up into slivers of glacial light.

The cycle begins again, and is repeated without losing any of its trance-like power. When *The Messenger* eventually ends, we find ourselves watching the screen grow completely dark. The dim-

utive form, now impossible to recognise, is snuffed out. So instead of encouraging us to have faith in a Resurrection, Viola's mesmerising work emphasises the inevitability of physical obliteration.

In this respect, the Durham installation confirms the involvement with mortality in many of Viola's earlier video pieces. But *The Messenger* does not seem at all morbid. Its prevailing quality lies in an extraordinary sense of graceful lyricism. Perhaps the figure is spiritually buoyed up by the knowledge that a cyclical rhythm controls his fate, enabling him to ebb and flow like a tide. Above all, it enables us to take heart from the dimmed moment when his mouth sends out an affirmation of life, demonstrating beyond all doubt that contemporary art can still play a potent and illuminating role in the most awesome of ecclesiastical interiors.

● *The Messenger* has now been acquired by the Guggenheim Museum in New York and will on show there from Jan 18 to March 23

The old made new

MUSIC

The Sixteen/
Christophers
St John's
Smith Square

and some few for whom it was the first. How, then, to make the old new once again without recourse to mere novelty? And how to avoid the clichés of both post-imperial and Post-Modern, period-instrument Handel without mannerism and the arch? These were the challenges met by Christophers in a performance of dramatic intensity.

The orchestra played with the sensuous austerity for which it is famed: chorals and rhythmic figures incisive, yet

melted into a single humming line in, for instance, its accompaniment to the tenor aria *Comfort ye*. The Sixteen themselves — all 18 of them, on this occasion — had thought through every choral line. The natural inflection of the biblical words as set by Handel would frequently be newly-lit by, for instance, the momentary expansion, rather than mere emphasis, of the first syllable of "Wonderful" in *For unto us a Child is born*. And the snarling inner parts of the

taunting chorus, *He trusted in God* intensified the drama within a drama which is *Messiah's* darkest hour.

The tenor Mark Padmore brought real urgency to his recitatives. Michael Georg created seismic movement high up on the Richter scale in his shaking of the heaven and the earth. Michael Chance's counter-tenor leapt high and pure with the refiner's fire and Lynda Russell showed there was no need to turn *Rejoice greatly* into a jig to make it lively.

This was a remarkable performance by any standards, but particularly from a band of musicians who had been touring for seven gruelling nights before Christmas.

HILARY FINCH

THE radio year has only six days left to come up with anything more entertaining than *Fand and Familiar* (Radio 4, 2pm, tomorrow). Tailor-made for Christmas, yet not a question of Christmas in it, it is a pot-pourri of verse, epigrams and ballads. Outrageously funny one moment, poignant the next.

The selection was made by John Moffat. He, Judi Dench, Michael Williams and the implacably pianistic Michael Haskins make up

the performing quartet. The interplay between them is kept to a minimum so that we can enjoy the jewels of the collection without distraction. The keynote of producer Enyd Williams's show is struck by the line "The cares that infest the day shall fold their tents like Arabs and, as silently, steal away."

Gilbert and Sullivan kept MPs out of their fairy opera

Iolanthe. No such proscription mars Classic FM's extraordinary production of it (Classic FM, 2pm, tomorrow). Edwina Currie (title role), Teresa Gorman, Clare Short, Diane Abbot, Tony Banks, Jerry Hayes all have roles. The House of Lords is stoutly represented by Lord Healey (as Lord Chancellor), Lord Howe of Aberavon (Earl of Mountararat), and

Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare (Earl Tolloller). It is either good news or bad that none of them sings. They speak their parts, while the professionals do all the warbling.

When *Iolanthe* opened in 1882, *The Times* sniftily said of it: "Healthy, albeit not supremely intellectual." In 1996, it's as healthy as ever. Intellectualism can go and take a running jump.

PETER DAVALLE

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POP 1

Jools Holland offers glorious variety and a great guest-list to the Shepherd's Bush crowd



POP 2

... but Marc Almond finds the going far from easy in an accident-prone Dublin gig

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE 1

Ronnie Corbett and Zoë Hall lead the fun in *Mother Goose*

VENUE: Now at the Churchill, Bromley



CHOICE 2

... while Hinge and Bracket turn again in *Dick Whittington*

VENUE: Now at the Arvil, Basingstoke

POP AND BLUES: Fun with mighty Marc and groovy Jools, and a nudge-nudge from Dana

Saved by Soft Cell hits

It was billed as "the definitive festive celebration" with fans encouraged to "wear their Santa hats and pixie outfits". However, neither the gig nor the audience turned out, so to speak, as expected.

A quick scan of the half-full Red Box revealed that it had been a quiet night for the city's costume hire specialists, while the first half of the show had one contemplating whether or not Almond's artistic goose was cooked. This was mainly

due to factors outside his control, namely the poor sound quality and erratic lighting.

Almond put it down to lack of time for a soundcheck, having arrived in Dublin late. But if the sense of anticlimax was palpable, it became clear as the night wore on that the veteran artist was not content to let such tribulations spoil the party.

Musically the pendulum swung between keyboard-dominated disco and guitar-based torch songs, reflecting both his electro-soul roots with Soft Cell and his later incarnation as a Euro-sophisticate with a penchant for Jacques Brel standards.

He has even taken up with Sides for his current single, *Yesterday Is Gone*, but in the absence of the string-soaked orchestra that adorns the record and without a Proby to duet with him, it did not have quite the impact of *Say Tears Rb*.

But it was the Soft Cell classics which sorted out the boys from the early Eighties nostalgists, the bleak majesty of *Bedstirrer* and the unfeigned romanticism of *Torch* reminding us why some people see Almond as a precursor to Jarvis Cocker.

A rousing acoustic version of *Say Hello, Wave Goodbye* was the apt finale to a gig that may not have delivered on its promise but at least showed there is still life in Almond's erotic cabaret yet — with or without those pixie outfits.

NICK KELLY



The man who brought his piano to the party, and everyone asked him to play: the terminally funky Jools Holland

Santa's hip helpers

Recently, the commercial for a well-known American liquor company was shot in a crowded New Orleans bar. The patrons led the good times roll to the accompaniment of the Big Easy's favourite night tripper, Dr John. Shepherds Bush is a long way from the Mississippi delta, but Jools Holland served up such a rich musical gumbo the other night that he could have filled the good doctor's post and the party would have been none the wiser.

And yet part of the pleasure of Holland's Christmas jamboree came in the fact that he is no longer merely a New Orleans wannabe. Certainly

just as, at this time of year, theatre-goers' minds turn to pantos, so Dana Gillespie's raucous repertoire belongs to the tradition of blues singing as light-hearted, near-the-knuckle entertainment. In the age of gangsta rap's Oedipal insults, Gillespie's repertoire — like George Melly's long-running Christmas show at Ronnie Scott's — revives a more subtle vein of lewd behaviour.

Compared with Ruth Brown's burlesques, Gillespie's stage persona is bound to appear more contrived: Sobu is always going to be a long way from the bordellos of the old Storyville district of New Orleans, home to piano "professors" and streetwalkers alike.

But, as with Melly's blend of Bessie Smith and art gallery banter, the element of play-acting has its own appeal. The contrast between Gillespie's demure

voice and the raucous repertoire of *Professor Longhair* and *Fats Domino*, but it now reaches with self-assurance into pop, soul and jazz, a broad canvas further embellished by an excellent horn section.

In addition to his regular band, featuring brother Chris Holland on organ and former Squeeze colleague Gilson Lavis on drums, Holland never goes anywhere in concert these days without his Rhythm & Blues orchestra: three saxophones, two trombones and two trumpets that beckon from the stage like a well-stocked mini-bar.

Just as, at this time of year, theatre-goers' minds turn to pantos, so Dana Gillespie's raucous repertoire belongs to the tradition of blues singing as light-hearted, near-the-knuckle entertainment. In the age of gangsta rap's Oedipal insults, Gillespie's repertoire — like George Melly's long-running Christmas show at Ronnie Scott's — revives a more subtle vein of lewd behaviour.

Compared with Ruth Brown's burlesques, Gillespie's stage persona is bound to appear more contrived: Sobu is always going to be a long way from the bordellos of the old Storyville district of New Orleans, home to piano "professors" and streetwalkers alike.

But, as with Melly's blend of Bessie Smith and art gallery banter, the element of play-acting has its own appeal. The contrast between Gillespie's demure

Jools Holland Empire, W12

Fifty-plus shows as the urbane compere of BBC2's *Later* have also made Holland the man with the fastest phone book in the business, as this audience found to its immense delight. There were guest vocal spots for Sam Brown, who offered an unexpected but spirited *Times They Are A-Changin'*, and for Edith Piaf, reprising her lead on *Waiting Game*. From Holland's understated current album *Sex & Jazz & Rock & Roll*, the veteran Jamaican trombonist Rico also stepped forward from the R&B Orchestra to take a lead on *Able Mabel*, while Chris Holland

contributed a strong first voice to the Squeeze chestnut *Tempted*.

But it was Holland's other special guest who took the celebrations to a fresh level: Paul Weller may not strike one as the life and soul of festive fun, but it really was the Modfather himself making an unscheduled appearance, jamming on Billy Preston's *Will It Go Round in Circles* and Chris Domino's *In Walkin'*. With such a guest list and a confident, disciplined performance from our host, the archetypal good time was had by all. This was one party where not a soul remained in the kitchen.

PAUL SEXTON

Carry on smutting

Dana Gillespie Pizza Express Club

speaking voice and the fearsome manes she portrays in songs lends the evening a surreal veneer of theatricality. When she indulges in the double entendres of "jelly roll" and the erotic properties of "bacon and cabbage" you can almost imagine her bringing half a Tory Cabinet to the knees.

Big Boy and *King Size Papa* launched the proceedings in suitably tongue-in-cheek fashion. Gillespie supported by a buoyant and unfussy band led by her pianist Stan Greig. Long before recording executives concocted *Spice Girls*, she was following Queen Bees' example and laying down her own terms in the battle of the bedroom.

Gillespie joined Greig on the piano stool for more mischief-making on the lively *Organ Grinder Blues*. She seldom hears as more risqué lines as this outside a *Carry On* script. But there was a weightier side to the performance too, her voice growing darker and deeper on a slow reading of *St Louis Blues* which wove its way towards — excuse the Gillespie-ism — a throaty climax.

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Alan Coren



Yesterday, I asked the Editor what he wanted for Christmas. I hoped he would say slippers. He did not. He said he wanted a short history of Christmas. It serves me right for asking.

274 The Emperor Aurelian chooses 25 December as the birthday of the unconquered sun (*natalis solis invicti*). To celebrate the event, his wife buys him a pair of gloves (*tegumenta*). They do not fit (*inutilis*). 356 With the arrival of Christianity in Rome, the Church establishes the birth of Christ on the same date. To celebrate this, the Emperor Constantine asks his wife for a set of ring-spanners. He gets gloves.

541 Christmas celebrated in Jerusalem for the first time. Most theologians agree that the reason for the delay was that it took two centuries for the concept of gloves to spread eastwards.

583 First appearance of holly as a Christmas decoration — adapted from a pagan regeneration rite marking the time of year when things began to look up for greenroovers.

731 Christmas arrives in England, prompting the Venerable Bede to write his first book, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, translated into the vernacular as *Better Than Gloves*. He dies in Jarrow, but his remains are moved to Durham on Christmas Day 1031 to coincide with the reissue of the paperback. Musical adaptation goes to Number One.

881 Hiding from the Danes in Athelney, King Alfred is forced to spend Christmas with an old couple, who give him gloves. In retaliation, he pours brandy over their cake and ignites it. Staunchly loyal, however, they applaud when he brings it in. Moved, he becomes a good king.

1191 Sensing the marketing possibilities of laying copyright claim to Nazareth, the Third Crusade embarks for the Holy Land to secure the Christmas card franchise. The Turks and Syrians resist fiercely, since they control the fig, date, and mince-meat trade, and fear it will be ruined if housewives spend all their money on rhyming correspondence.

1192 Returning to England, King Richard's troops find their wives being kissed in the hall by strange men. The wives explain that this is a new magical method of freeing hammerbeams from mistletoe infestation.

1193 Richard and his army embark for France. The fighting continues for some years. Returning to England, his men discover that they have several new children. The wives explain that, every Christmas, a man climbs down the chimney.

1588 Armada sunk. British sherry introduced.

1589 293 separate salvage attempts on Spanish wrecks.

1590 Potatoes and cigars introduced to Elizabeth's court at Christmas lunch by Sir Walter Raleigh. They are not a success: the Queen is unable to light her cigarette, and the Earl of Essex surreptitiously gives his boiled panettas to the cat.

1603 Accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England heralds the advent of the tarran slipper.

1662 Several Plymouth pilgrims return from New World with turkeys, for Christmas with relatives. First hot roast turkey eaten.

1663 Last cold roast turkey eaten.

1664 Last turkey risotto polished off.

1665 Great Plague.

1669 William of Orange accedes, introducing many interesting Dutch fashions. At Christmas, 2,867 people die of advocat.

1733 John Kay invents flying shuttle, revolutionising textile industry. At Christmas, loved ones excitedly exchange a million dressing gowns. After Christmas, they are exchanged again, this time for credit notes.

John Kay put in stocks by shopkeepers and pelted with unsold gloves, tarran slippers and bottles of advocat.

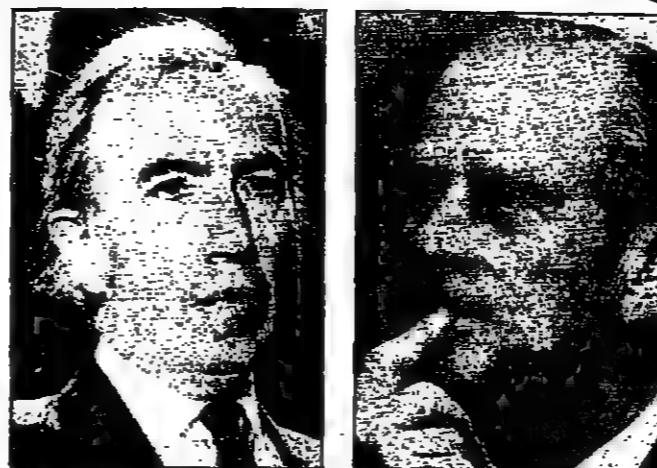
1785 Edmund Cartwright invents power loom. First mass-produced beige cardigans begin appearing in dustbins.

1914 Christmas Day soccer fixture between England and Germany degenerates into unprecedented scenes of violence. Rival supporters fight it out for four years. Germany subsequently demands replay.

1923 John Logie Baird — having spent Christmas dragging his kids screaming over busted train-sets, trying to remove advocat from all the dressing-gowns he has to take back, and suffering from nine assorted dysfunctions of liver, brain and gut, plus carving thumb stilled up by drunken locum — pledges himself to inventing a better way of passing the festive season. Tragically, he manages only to come up with the worst way of all.

The danger from homicidal maniacs does not begin with their weapons, says Woodrow Wyatt

Why violent videos do more harm than guns



Lord St John and the Duke: who has the right to speak?

Firearms (Amendment) Bill that is now going through the Lords would be so sensational an intervention in party politics that it would inevitably, in the public mind, impugn the Queen's political status.

Prince Philip is an expert on the care and handling of guns, not merely from his naval service in the war, but from his prolific use of them in peacetime when shooting game. Defending him on the TV programme, I said we were lucky to have the opinion of so great an expert, and I agreed with him that the new gun laws would not save a single life.

As we all do, the Duke grieves for the lost children of Dunblane, but laws enacted in response to emotional impulse are unsound, particularly, in my view, when the political parties cynically vie with each other in milking the emotions for political advantage.

In August 1987 Michael Ryan murdered people wantonly in Hungerford. Unlicensed lethal weapons were found among his possessions. Anyone intent on mass murder can easily obtain illegal weapons, which are flooding in from Russia via Germany,

Ireland and elsewhere. (Strangely enough, the new gun laws will not apply in Northern Ireland.) The headmaster Philip Lawrence was murdered with a knife. In the Tokyo underground, hundreds of passengers were subjected to poison gas. In Tasmania, Martin Bryant committed multiple slaughter. We live in times when some deranged people consider violence to be normal.

This lunacy is fanned non-stop by the BBC, commercial television and videos. The top ten rental videos have an average of 13 gun-killing and six killings by other means. Crazed Martin Bryant had a vast collection of such videos. These insidious films, imitated by those on the verge of insanity, should be banned by law — not handguns owned by the law-abiding who

pass the required firing tests.

On the television programme, to the surprise of Mr Greenslade, callers rang to say "Lord Wyatt is right". Mr Greenslade hand-somely conceded that the mood appears to be changing. It is.

The Snowdrop campaigners of Dunblane have gone too far in blackmailing our emotions. The analogy used by the Duke, of killing with a cricket bat, though perfectly possible, was light-hearted. It was regarded by the Snowdrop campaigners as joking about a taboo subject, as though the inanimate weapon were the culprit, not the evil mind behind it. Even if it were possible to ban all weapons it would not be desirable.

Last August the *New York Post* carried a remarkable article by Dr Irwin Stelzer in which he quoted from official statistics. Serious crimes in New York — murder, burglary, robbery, sex crimes and auto-thefts — were down by almost 12 per cent in the first six months of this year compared with the first half of 1995. This though the city is thick with illegal weapons.

Looking further afield, wide-

spread academic research has shown that almost half the burglaries in Britain, where there are already strict gun-control laws, are so-called "hot burglaries". The criminal strikes when residents are at home. In America, however, the burglars worry lest the householder has a gun. Some 56 per cent of the felony prisoners in ten state jails said they would not attack a potential victim known to be armed or who might be armed. Consequently, the "hot burglary" rate in America is only 13 per cent.

If rapists and bag-matchers thought that women might be carrying handguns, they would be afraid to attack. In the United States, it is estimated that if those states which have adopted provisions allowing people to carry concealed guns had adopted them earlier, approximately 1,570 murders, 4,177 rapes and more than 60,000 aggravated assaults would have been avoided annually.

Contrary to the prevailing illusion that fewer guns mean less crime, it appears that the more law-abiding men and women there are who know how to handle guns and are allowed to carry them, the less crime there is. As so often, we appear to be going in the direction opposite to that which we intend.

Meanwhile, congratulations to the Duke of Edinburgh for bluntness stating the obvious — a practice which in this country is generally regarded as eccentric.

Rewards of a thankless task

People who work at Christmas are truly entering into the holiday spirit

You probably expect me, as a notorious mother and public waffer about child rearing, to devote this Christmas Eve space to something heart-bound and familial. Cue stockings and Santa, stuffing-balls and in-laws, frosty walks and country churches, cribs and carols and sugary domestic contentment.

A fair enough presumption: useless to deny that I have trodden that path, kept the peace and worn the paper hat for enough years to win my Grade 7 Festive Motherhood Medal and Order of the Mince Pie (2nd class).

However, I have to tell you that every year at this time a curious wistful sense comes to me of something missing. And although I am exactly where I ought to be for the moment, yet still a small treacherous part of me wonders whether

it will ever again know the queer, lonely but strangely satisfying feeling of working on Christmas Day.

Hundreds do. Nurses and doctors and sailors at sea, firefighters and police, broadcasters, weather forecasters, soldiers, security guards, low-paid assistants in old people's homes and high-paid Anthea Turner on *HMS Belfast*; hotel staff, power stations and Directory Inquiries, AA and RAC, coastguards and emergency gas fitters. We may think of Britain tomorrow as slumped companionably watching the Queen (or Rory Bremner) with bits of Party Popper in its hair, but that is not the whole story. There will also be men and women in half-deserted offices and cold Portakabins, walking through hushed wards, milking cows, checking instruments, pushing the button to start the videotape of Christmas TV specials recorded in October, and sitting in the strangely and landscape of deserted newspaper offices dropping mince-pie crumbs in the keyboard as they mosey past in stories of Christmas babies and foreign disasters.

Those who work on Christmas Day are a small, strange, proud tribe. By convention everybody says to them: "Oh hard luck, poor you, but think of the overtime, and you'll get next year off." The workers rarely contradict them. It would not be seemly. They may meekly point out that Christmas priority goes to those with small children, but prefer not to admit to uninitiated that working on Christmas Day, in most of the jobs that

require it, has inimitable satisfactions of its own. Even less would they admit that these satisfactions connect in an inarticulate way with the concept of goodwill to all men, and that it can feel more Christmassy, not less, to be at work.

I blame Scrooge. Hunched in his counting-house, begrudging Bob Cratchit a few hours off, the old curmudgeon gave Christmas Day working a bad name. Deep in Dickens's fable is the suggestion that sitting down to a family dinner is not only pleasant but morally superior. No doubt there were plenty of night-soil collectors and lamp-lighters grafting away in the background when Scrooge ran out shouting his conversion to the concept of a Merry Christmas, but they are out of sight. Christmas equals goodwill, goodwill equals a family table, and anybody

admitting they like being at work on the 25th of December is tainted with bah-humbugism.

I loved it. In young adulthood, at least, work was where I best belonged: in future years, in that lull before the onset of grandchildren, it may well draw me back. As Giles Coren perceptively (and rather bravely) pointed out last week in these pages, there is a curious and unsettling phase when family Christmases consist of parents in their fifties with children in their twenties, all staring at a turkey and wishing to God that there was someone around who wanted Lego or a fairy outfit. I was lucky: at that period I worked in local radio and could volunteer to go in before Christmas dawn, send pulse-tone to the transmitter, plug up the studio, pull open a fader or the 0600 time signal, play in a tape carillon and all alone wish Oxfordshire a happy Christmas.

I went on from there into phone-lines, real conversations with real strangers who were for one reason or another sufficiently alone on Christmas morning to find solace in joshing with a local radio presenter. Sometimes it involved nipping down to the Radcliffe Infirmary children's ward to confront pale children with Johnnie Chucks the clown. Sometimes the shift stretched on into the melancholy Christmas evening, so that the station could say goodnight properly and show that it still cared. A duty newspaper would be in for a while, but for much of the day I would be alone



Grace Darling and her father: service in the bleak midwinter

with Christmas, with calls in from listeners (often themselves at work) and calls out to the emergency services and the weather centre. Down the tiny lines we all gigged with the camaraderie of working on Christmas Day. Sometimes if my shift ended early I went down to the Cyrenian shelter and washed dishes for assorted tramps and lost, drunk Irish lads who had fallen through the bottom of the building trade. I loved it all. Goodwill to all men? Oh, it's out there all right.

This all came back when I read that for the last time this year, there is a rock off our coastline with not only a lighthouse on it but two resident lighthouse-keepers. At the weekend in Scotland, Mearns Forge and Kenny Weir were

gently regretting that Hyskeir, their lighthouse off the West Highland coast, will be uninhabited by March. This is the last time we may drink at cosy Christmas tables to men on lonely rocks who keep lights burning for seafarers.

Their strange, lonely, vital profession has run its historical course: the last English lighthouses were automated a couple of years ago, and now the last of the northern lights follows. It has been a good trade as Mr Forge put it, "a life of orderly self-reliance", watching the sea and tending the light. At times — as when Keeper William Darling and his daughter Grace rowed out from the Farnie to the stricken ship *Porfashire* — it included the even higher duty of rescue.

The isolation and dutifulness of these men goes strangely well with Christmas. Yachtsmen used to sail out on Boxing Day to deliver parcels to the Needles Lighthouse, old-fashioned households felt no Christmas complete without a recitation of W.W. Gibson's poem about the disappearance of the Flannan Islands keepers.

Though three men dwell on Flannan Isle To keep the lamp alight As we steer'd under the lee, we caught No glimmer through the night.

It was all true; the Flannan keepers were indeed lost, in 1900. On Boxing Day of that year the master of the investigating ship, the *Hesperus*, telegraphed: "The clocks were stopped and other signs indicated that the accident must have happened about a week ago. Poor fellows, they must have been blown over the cliffs or drowned trying to secure a crane or something like that."

He continued, practically: "I have left Moore, MacDonald, buoy-master and two seamen on the island to keep the light burning." So that was their Christmas too: on duty alone in the cold and the wind and spray, unmoved by the mystery they had found, keeping a public service going.

I suppose that if you were forced to work in a hawthick international bank on Christmas Day, or were an underpaid madd waiting on an unpleasant household, you might rightly resent it. Even for essential and honourable service professionals, missing the sight of your own children opening their stockings must be cause for a certain gloom. But otherwise Christmas working can be wonderful. If goodwill to all men is the point, then to be the boy with your finger in the dike, the lone watchkeeper, the guard at society's gate protecting the innocent revellers from harm, or — even better — the volunteer slaving over tea-urns at a Crisis lunch for the homeless — is not a burden but an honour.

To some, anyway; and I suspect they are often the ones who volunteer and so end up doing it. To come back to the lighthousekeepers again, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses laid down in the early part of the century their requirements for employees on rock stations:

Not every man is suitable to be a light-keeper. The good lightkeeper has or acquires the temperament necessary for this job, which has much loneliness and isolation in its composition — a lightkeeper will not make a fortune, but the odds are he will be at peace with himself and with the world.

Yes, that's it exactly. To anybody working tomorrow, happy Christmas and thank you.

Widow piqued

Widow Twankey will not be appearing on the Test tour of Zimbabwe this Christmas. The traditional pantomime staged by the press for England's cricketers has been cancelled because the players, stung by relentless crit-

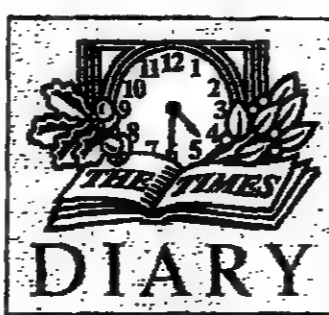
cism of their performances, refuse to attend.

"In the late 1980s, the press pantomimes were very popular and everybody thought it was very funny," said one Test tour regular. "This year, however, the England management declined. They complained that the press coverage had been virulent and personal."

Even the appearance in southern Africa of Ian Botham, no stranger to ridiculous pantomime performances, has not shaken the management's resolve. From a high point in the late 1980s, relations between players and the press have sunk lower and lower.

"Part of the problem is that the players have not been coming out drinking," explained a journalist. "They retire to their hotel, where they have become obsessed with a word game called Balderdash. They play it as if there wasn't any other game."

Can Diana, Princess of Wales, be planning to hoof it to Australia for her post-Christmas hole? I understand that two VIP tickets for Sydney have been



booked through Heathrow under the name of Mendham. The Princess's constant holiday companion is one Victoria Mendham.

Mug's games

NO SLOUCHES, the bobbies in Stoke Newington. When reports filtered through of a gang that was robbing Orthodox Jews as they left banks in the north London neighbourhood, operation "Hill Street Jews" was put into action.

After seeking sartorial advice from a rabbi, an officer donned the long coat, waistcoat and hat sported by Hasidic Jews and hung about furtively outside a bank. It didn't matter that the decoy had failed to remember the Orthodox ringlets and beard of the Orthodox

Jew, the muggers weren't picky: they rushed up to him, mobbed him and were promptly arrested.

Riotous though the event was, Mike Moore wasn't the snapper who let fly at the Daily Mirror photographers' party, crunching a chap's nose. I apologise for suggesting that it was his right hook that caused the damage.

Soft sell

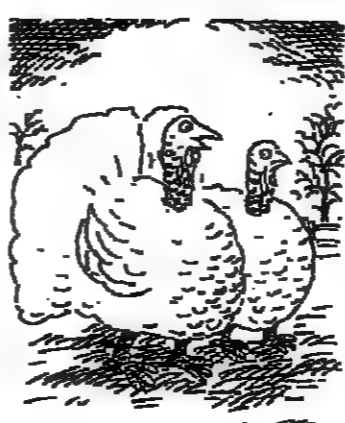
NEWT GINGRICH, the fiery orator and House of Representatives Speaker, seems to have mellowed. Senators and congressmen have been falling over themselves to be nice to each other since opinion polls showed that the American public do not want their politicians to fight and bicker any more. Mr Gingrich's bolder rhetoric has been replaced by words of loving understanding, typified by one much-used phrase, "the fallibility of man".

Some are suggesting that Mr Gingrich's change in tone had more to do with the investigation this week by the Congressional Ethics Committee into allegations concerning his past behaviour as Speaker, to which he admitted two days ago, "I don't fall for it," says a

senior Capitol Hill employee. "I've heard that fallibility of man stuff too often recently and it's just not like him."

Malt-easer

EVER the local squire, the Prince of Wales yesterday pitched up at his local pub to weigh in on a discussion about a local planning concern: whether the disused railway



"I was bound to get off on appeal once Michael Howard bought me."

yard in Tetbury should be turned into a country park.

Over a tumbler of malt at the Royal Oak, the Prince appeared to support the scheme. The landlady's verdict: "A very nice young man who seemed to like his whisky."

China crisis

A COLOURFUL, beautifully designed calendar plate was intended to be one of the seasonal highlights produced by Spode.

A batch of 1,200 was produced and passed the rigorous checks that fine bone china undergoes. The glaze was perfect, the pattern positioned correctly and the colours superb. It was left to a packer at the pottery's Stoke factory to spot the flaw: the plate showed that 1997 was going to have only 364 days. December 31 did not exist.

Deliveries were cancelled but the picturesque plates were not destroyed. They were given to the Spode staff as an extra Christmas bonus.

Expect double portions of brandy butter at the Ayrshire home of Kirsty Hume, an up-and-coming supermodel. Her boyfriend Donovan Leitch, son of the 1960s crooner Donovan, is reportedly planning



to propose to her under the mistletoe after a brief courtship (the couple met at a nightclub in May). Donovan has already bought the ring, and I suggest that he contrives to pop it, wrapped in foil, into her portion of Christmas pud.



Ian Botham: pantomime king



COURT CIRCULAR

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 23: The Prince of Wales this morning visited the Tisbury Railway Yard, Gloucestershire.

Princess Alice Duchess of Gloucester celebrates her 95th birthday tomorrow.
Princess Alexandra celebrates her 60th birthday tomorrow.

Church in Wales

Appointments

Diocese of Llandaff
The Rev Paul Overend, Anglican Chaplain to the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and Assistant Chaplain to the University of Wales College of Cardiff has been appointed Senior Anglican Chaplain to the University of Wales Colleges of Cardiff.

The Rev Malcolm Railton Ellis, Vicar of Cardiff St John Baptist, is also to be Precursor of Llandaff Cathedral.
The Rev Stephen Weeding, Curate of Merthyr Tydfil Christ Church, has been appointed Vicar in the Parish of Abercromby.

The Rev Michael Leslie Wishart, formerly Royal Naval Chaplain, has been appointed Rector of Dowlais. The Institution and Induction will take place on February 18. Canon John Henry Lewis Rowlands, Warden of St Michael's Theological College, Llandaff, has been appointed Vicar of the Parish of Whitchurch.

Diocese of St Asaph
The Rev Frederick Alfred George Mudge, Vicar of Penarth All Saints, retired on December 1.

Christmas birthdays

Christmas Eve
Mr J.K. Ashcroft, former chairman, Colford Group, 48; Mr A.T. Baillie, diplomat, 64; Mrs Mair Barnes, former managing director, Woolworths, 52; Professor Anthony Clare, psychiatrist, 54; Sir Colin Cowdrey, cricketer, 64; Sir Gerald Elliot, former chairman, Christian Salvages, 73; Mr Jeremy Hindley, racehorse trainer, 53; Sir James Ildge, diplomat, 53; Dame Joan Kelleher, former director, WRAC, 81; Sir Ivan Lawrence, QC, MP, 60; Mr John Marek, MP, 56; Miss Suzy Menkes, fashion journalist, 53; Miss Thea Porter, fashion designer, 69; Mr John Taylor, MP, 59; Miss Carol Vorderman, broadcaster, 36; Mr Philip Ziegler, author, 67.

Christmas Day
Lord Annan, 80; Mr James Bolger, racehorse trainer, 55; Miss S.J. Browne, former Principal, Newnham College, Cambridge, 72; Sir Kenneth Calman, Chief Medical Officer, HM Government, 55; Mr F.N. David, former commander, Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, 53; Professor Christopher Frayling, Rector, Royal College of Art, 80; Lord Grade, 90; the Right Rev Noel Jones, Bishop of Sodor and Man, 64; Sir Nick Larmour, former diplomat, 80; Miss Annie Lennox, singer, 42; Professor Philip Love, Vice-Chancellor, Liverpool University, 57; Sir Peter Matthews, former Chief Constable, Surrey, 79; Mr Ismail Merchant, film producer, 60; Professor Phyllida Parslow, Warden, Willis Hall, Bristol, 66; Lord Sheppard of Digby, 64; Mr Nigel Stanner-Smith, sports commentator, 52; Sir Noel Stockdale, life president, Asda Group, 76; the Right Rev B.N.Y. Vaughan, former Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, 79; Sir Christopher Wales, chief executive, Wales Building Group, 57.

Church news

New Bishop of Huntingdon
The Venerable John Flack, Archbishop of Pontefract, and an Honorary Canon of Wakefield Cathedral, diocese of Wakefield, is to be Suffragan Bishop of Huntingdon, in the diocese of Ely, succeeding the Right Rev Gordon Roe, who retires on January 5, 1997.

Appointments
The Rev Jonathan Baker, Assistant Curate, St Mark's, Reading, is to be Priest-in-charge, parishes of St Mark Reading and Holy Trinity, Reading (Oxford).

The Rev Paul Barlow, Assistant Curate, Team Parish of Hale w Badshot Lea (Guildford) to be Assistant Curate, Christchurch (Winchester).

The Rev Kurt Barton, Assistant Curate, St Mary the Virgin and All Saints, Bournemouth, is to be Team Vicar, St Albans, 'Southend Team Ministry' (Chelmsford), Canon Richard Bolland, Vicar, St Peter and Paul, Colchester, to be also Diocesan Ecumenical Officer (Birmingham).

The Rev Peter Tullett, Assistant Curate, Worle Team Ministry (Bath and Wells); to be Prison Chaplain, HM Young Offenders' Institution, Portland (Salisbury).
The Rev Anita Thorne, Priest-in-charge, Olveston (Bristol); to be Priest-in-charge, Portland All Saints w St Peter (Salisbury).

Resignations and retirements
Canon Stella Collins, Curate (NSM), Wilton w Netherhampton and Fugglestone, and Adviser on Women's Ministry (Salisbury); to retire January 5, 1997.

The Rev Robert Lowrie, Vicar, Redlynch and Morgan's Vale (Salisbury); to retire February 28, 1997.

Canon Bryan Robinson, Vicar, St Andrew w St Margaret, Virgin and All Saints, Bournemouth; to retire May 31, 1997.
The Rev Anthony Widdiey, Vicar, St Margaret, Ingol, Preston (Blackburn); to resign December 31.



Rudolf, Tinsel and Noel, three black-footed South African penguins, who have just been born at London Zoo. Visitors will be able to see them in the zoo's penguin pool early next year

Church services for Christmas Day and Boxing Day

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL 8.15-11.30 AM. Christmas Eve. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 AM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 1.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 3.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 5.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 7.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 9.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown.

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL 8.15-11.30 AM. Christmas Eve. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 AM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 1.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 3.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 5.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 7.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 9.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown.

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL 8.15-11.30 AM. Christmas Eve. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 AM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 1.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 3.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 5.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 7.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 9.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown. 11.30 PM. Christmas Day. The Rev. Canon J. J. McKeown.

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Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.W. Bledsoe and Miss C.M. Boddington
The engagement is announced between Paul, youngest son of Mr Carter Bledsoe, of McLean, Virginia, USA, and the late Mrs Phyllis Bledsoe, of McLean, daughter of Mr and Mrs W.C. Boddington, of Broad Campden, Gloucestershire.

Mr E.J. Curtis and Miss R. Spalding
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Leonard Curtis, of Gravesend, Kent and Rosina, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Spalding, of Bedale, North Yorkshire.

Mr L.B.M. Foster and Miss A.J. MacKenzie
The engagement is announced between Benedict, fourth son of Mr and Mrs Michael Foster, of Richmond, Surrey, and Alexandra, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ian MacKenzie, of Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

Mr M. Harvey and Miss P.A. Cane
The engagement is announced between Michael, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Norman Harvey, of Preston, Hertfordshire, and Patricia, daughter of Mr and Mrs Paul Cane, of Ham Common, Surrey.

Mr J.P. Wallis and Miss J.L. Sheriff
The engagement is announced between Jamie, son of Mr and Mrs Peter H. Wallis, of London, and Joanna, daughter of Mr Arthur Sheriff, of Ditcham, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs Paul J. Borrett, of London.

Dr P.D.W. Kieley and Dr T.M. Shah
The engagement is announced between Patrick, son of Dr and Mrs D.G. Kieley, of Emsworth, Hampshire, and Tanja, daughter of Syed N.A. and Gertraud-Luise Shah, of London.

Marriages

Viscount Coke and Miss P.M. Whately
The marriage took place on Saturday at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Gillingham, Dorset. Viscount Coke, elder son of the Earl of Leicester and Valeria, Viscountess Coke, both of Norfolk, to Miss Polly Whately, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs David Whately, of Dorset. The Right Rev E.J.K. Roberts officiated, assisted by Canon J. McNeill.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Molly Miller-Mundy, Guy Colman-Rogers, Iona Stewart-Richardson, Archie Bellville, Emma Finlayson and Archie Phillips. Mr Robbie Buxton was best man.

A reception was held at the home of the bride and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr B.C. Albery and Miss C.R.K. Holmes
The marriage took place on Saturday, December 7 at St George's, Hanover Square, W1, between Bronson, son of Mr Ian Albery and Mrs Barbara Albery, of London, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Holmes, formerly of Revesden, Bedfordshire.

Anniversaries

Christmas Eve
BIRTHS: King John, reigned 1199-1216, Oxford, 1167; St Ignace of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, Loyola, Province of Guipúzcoa, 1491; George Crabbe, poet, Aldeburgh, Suffolk, 1754; Adam Mickiewicz, poet, Novogrod, Lithuania, 1798; James Joule, physicist, Salford, Lancashire, 1818; Matthew Arnold, poet and critic, Laleham, Middlesex, 1822; John Morley, Viscount Morley of Blackburn, statesman and writer, Blackburn, 1838; George I, King of Greece 1863-1913, Copenhagen, 1845; Juan Ramón Jiménez, poet, Nobel laureate 1956, Moguer, Spain, 1881; Louis Jouvet, actor, Finistère, 1887; Howard Hughes, manufacturer, aviator and film producer, Houston, 1905.

Christmas Day
DEATHS: Vasco da Gama, navigator, Cochim, India, 1524; Thomas Beddoes, physician, 1808; William Makepeace Thackeray, novelist, London, 1863; Leon Bakst, stage designer, Paris, 1924; Alban Berg, composer, Vienna, 1935; Louis Aragon, writer, Paris, 1982.

Verdi's opera *Aida* was performed for the first time in Cairo, 1871.
The London Coliseum opened, 1904.
Libya became independent and King Idris I acceded to the throne, 1951.
Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan as the Kabul Government fell, 1979.

Christmas Day
BIRTHS: Orlando Gibbons, musician, Cambridge, 1583; Sir Isaac Newton, physicist, Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire, 1642; William Collins, poet, Chichester, 1721; Dorothy Wordsworth, writer, Cockermouth, Cumberland, 1771; Alexander Scriabin, composer, Moscow, 1872; Mohammed Ali Jinnah, 1st Governor-General of Pakistan 1947-48, Karachi, 1876; Maurice Utrillo, painter, Paris, 1883; Conrad Hilton, hotel magnate, San Antonio, New Mexico, 1887; Humphrey Bogart, actor, New York City, 1899; Mohamed Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt 1970-81, Tala, 1981.

Christmas Eve
DEATHS: Joseph Fouché, Duc d'Ortane, statesman, Trieste, 1830; Karel Čapek, dramatist, Prague, 1938; W.C. Fields, actor, Pasadena, 1946; Charles Pathé, film producer, 1957; Otto Loewi, physician, Nobel laureate 1936, New York, 1961; Sir Charles (Charlie) Chaplin, silent film star, Switzerland, 1977; Joan Miró, abstract painter, Majorca, 1983.

The first eisteddfod took place, Cardigan Castle, 1176.
The Pilgrims Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts, 1620.
The first Christmas tree in Britain was erected at Queen's Lodge, Windsor, by the German-born Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III, 1800.
Swimming in the ice-cold Serpentine was initiated, Hyde Park, London, 1864.
King George V made the first royal Christmas broadcast, 1932.
Nicolae Ceausescu, Romanian dictator, was executed, 1989.

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Nicolae Ceausescu, Romanian dictator, was executed, 1989.

Christmas Eve
DEATHS: Joseph Fouché, Duc d'Ortane, statesman, Trieste, 1830; Karel Čapek, dramatist, Prague, 1938; W.C. Fields, actor, Pasadena, 1946; Charles Pathé, film producer, 1957; Otto Loewi, physician, Nobel laureate 1936, New York, 1961; Sir Charles (Charlie) Chaplin, silent film star, Switzerland, 1977; Joan Miró, abstract painter, Majorca, 1983.

Christmas Day
DEATHS: Joseph Fouché, Duc d'Ortane, statesman, Trieste, 1830; Karel Čapek, dramatist, Prague, 1938; W.C. Fields, actor, Pasadena, 1946; Charles Pathé, film producer, 1957; Otto Loewi, physician, Nobel laureate 1936, New York, 1961; Sir Charles (Charlie) Chaplin, silent film star, Switzerland, 1977; Joan Miró, abstract painter, Majorca, 1983.

Latest wills are on the facing page

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

BIRTHS

BRASSARD - On 20th December at the Portland Hospital to Reginald (née Mince) and Kelly, a beautiful daughter, Kelly, a sister for Ashley, a beautiful son.

AGUIAR - On 18th December at the Portland Hospital to Aguiar-Lacauder and Newton Xavier Aguiar, a beautiful son.

AGUIAR - On 18th December at the Portland Hospital to Aguiar-Lacauder and Newton Xavier Aguiar, a beautiful son.

BARLEY - On 18th December at the Portland Hospital to Barley and Robert, a beautiful son.

BRASINGTON - On 17th December at the Portland Hospital to Brasington and Robert, a beautiful son.

BILLINGS - On 17th December at the Portland Hospital to Billings and Robert, a beautiful son.

BURCH - On 17th December at the Portland Hospital to Burch and Robert, a beautiful son.

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DEATHS

BERRY - On 22nd December 1996, loving husband of Mrs. Betty Berry, a devoted father of Carol, John, William, Sandra, Jane and Jonathan, a grandfather of four. Burial at St. Andrew's Church, Farnham, Surrey. Family flowers only.

BUTTERFIELD - On 22nd December 1996, loving husband of Mrs. Betty Berry, a devoted father of Carol, John, William, Sandra, Jane and Jonathan, a grandfather of four. Burial at St. Andrew's Church, Farnham, Surrey. Family flowers only.

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A high-contrast, black and white portrait photograph of a man, likely a historical figure, looking slightly to the left. The image is heavily stylized with high contrast, showing deep shadows and bright highlights. The man has short, dark hair and is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is dark and textured.

o'clock. Among these the alarm was something terrible to contemplate as, hurrying on bonnets and shawls, they rushed down to the mouth of the pit in excited groups. They knew what the report and the lurid flash of flame portended, and their anxiety to learn the worst was pitiable to see. Immediately after the explosion, Mr. William Thomas, consulting engineer of the company, organized a gang to repair the down shaft with the object of descending into the workings. The cage was lowered with an exploring party, but on nearing the bottom they met with a very formidable and, as it proved, insurmountable obstacle. This was a great pile of debris in

their way; indeed, the whole of the bottom of the shaft and the companion cage were worked, and placed an impassable barrier in the way either of ingress or egress. Certain it was that if that were the only way of escape those miners who might have survived were doomed to a living entombment, for a time at any rate. The guide ropes, too, were broken, and presented nothing but twisted and broken ends. Entrance by this means thus being rendered impossible, the exploring party turned to the only other way up the shaft. They found it intact, and a descent was at once begun, the time being now about 5 o'clock. Upon arriving at the bottom they found large throngs of eager and excited miners, who were ignorant of the fate of their comrades. The exploring party at once proceeded to the task of getting these men up; and 900 men were safely rescued in about three hours.

This, however, still left more than 200 unaccounted for in the workings. The party again proceeded to descend, and commenced the task of getting the missing men, and some little time they came upon the first sign of them. Upon penetrating along the passage a sad spectacle met their gaze. They saw there nearly 100 dead bodies lying upon the ground in most pitiable attitudes . . .

**80 FOOTBALL
GAMES TO BE WON**



If your team could be doing better, you can move into the transfer market to improve

☐ All Interactive Team Football transfer queries should be directed to 0171-757 7016. All other inquiries can be made on 01582 498 122.

LOANED PLAYERS

T Wright (Nottingham Forest to Reading, one week); R van der Laan (Derby to Wolverhampton, two weeks); R Ferdinand (West Ham to Bournemouth, two weeks); T Cooke (Manchester United to Birmingham, one week); P Tisdale (Southampton to Huddersfield, one week); J Selley (Arsenal to Southampton, two weeks); P Simpson (Derby to Sheffield United, two weeks); M Jordan (Everton to Birmingham, two weeks); M Bright (Sheffield Wednesday to Millwall, three weeks); John Sheridan (Sheffield Wednesday to Bolton, four weeks); Kevin Scool (Tottenham Hotspur to Charlton, four weeks)

Loan periods subject to fluctuation

Pos	Team	(player's name)	Pts	Pos	Team	(player's name)	Pts	Pos	Team	(player's name)	Pts
1	Sophie And Sam	(J Foster)	365	111	Mania	(Mr M Brown)	291	172	Turners Earners 1	(P Turner)	26
2	John Hunt Taunton D	(J Hunt)	365	112	Canons Hushers	(Mr D Cannon)	291	172	Turners Earners 5	(P Turner)	26
3	John Hunt Taunton H	(J Hunt)	364	113	Raj Is Back To Kill	(Mr J Gohli)	291	172	Ne	(Hugh Sornerville)	26
4	Nobby 4	(J Brown)	348	114	C U O K	(Mr G West)	291	172	Hunters Mob	(C Hunter)	26
5	John Hunt Taunton F	(J Hunt)	346	116	Trouble Shooters	(R Pitt)	290	185	Now We Are Two	(Mr J McKeown)	26
6	Nobby 33	(J Brown)	346	116	Sporty Big Bone	(J Staszewicz)	290	185	Faction United	(Mr E Cowan)	26
7	Tufus Taps	(D Tufus)	342	116	U Vent Us	(Mr T Staszewicz)	290	185	Shack Attack	(Mr R Shackleton)	26
8	Raj Is Back To Kill	(Mr R Gohli)	336	118	Live Boys Ltd 1	(Mr S Gower)	290	185	Raj Is Back To Kill	(Mr R Gohli)	26
9	John Hunt Taunton E	(J Hunt)	335	118	Thorn Footy FC	(Mr M Horan)	290	185	Lynne's Lynne	(Lynne Horan)	26
10	Gangsters	(A Lone)	334	118	Langaller Lads	(Mr N Finch)	290	185	Peraps Progress	(M Parash)	26
10	Brain's Team	(Mr B Howes)	334	118	Stuffs	(J Longstaff)	290	181	Don 3	(Mr D Shuter)	27
10	Daggers	(V Cox)	334	118	The Tomsters	(C C Vevens)	290	191	Calluna Conquerors	(M Convey)	27
13	John Hunt Taunton C	(J Hunt)	333	124	Where's Amos?	(L J Saunders)	289	191	Pen's People 2	(Mr P Gregoriot)	27
14	John Hunt Taunton G	(J Hunt)	329	124	T 35	(Mr T Bessant)	289	191	Always Portugal 1	(V Gomerates)	27
15	Where's Ray Goes	(Patrick Fromm)	327	124	Kryptonite 2	(Mr S Roberts)	289	191	Fair Aspects	(Alec Kirkwood)	27
16	Inter The Stand	(Mr M Ward)	326	124	Rainbow Warriors	(Mr G West)	289	191	Sid In A Carry On	(K James)	27
17	Jones Boys Three	(Mr M Jones)	325	124	Pacific All Star	(Thomas Leonard)	289	191	The Dummies 1	(D Shale)	27
18	Inter The Pub	(Mr M Ward)	323	124	Turners Earners 3	(P Turner)	289	193	Born Losers	(Mr P Ferdina)	27
18	Purple Rain	(Mr B Gohli)	323	124	Midfield Magic	(Jon Pregon)	289	193	Triple Top Tan	(Mr P Bailey)	27
18	Neat's At	(G P Dolan)	323	131	Ball Watchers	(Mr J Murray)	288	193	Perry 5	(Mr B Beer)	27
21	Born's Boys X 1	(Mr P Bown)	321	131	Byers Foreigners	(Mr D Thomas)	288	193	Top Bangers	(Martin Bottomley)	27
22	Brainwashed United	(Mr G Weiss)	321	131	Inter The Unknown	(Peter Bennett)	288	193	Football Juniors	(J Hunt)	27
22	Nobby	(J Brown)	321	131	Growlers United	(Mark Johnston)	288	193	John Hunt Taunton A	(J Hunt)	27
22	Nobby 26	(J Brown)	320	131	APC	(M Baber)	288	193	Bethford FC	(David Lee)	27
25	Ricky's Ringers	(Mr A Riggs)	319	131	Fortune Hunters	(N Farhall)	288	206	Spices 004	(Mr J Doody)	27
25	Edmo Ltd	(Mr D Edmondson)	319	131	Nobby 12	(J Brown)	288	206	P J B Bangers	(Mr P Butler)	27
27	Storm	(Mr P Mills)	318	138	Inter The Net	(Mr M Ward)	287	206	Good Times Boys	(Mr A Duggan)	27
27	Nobby 11	(J Brown)	318	138	Crane Vale	(Mr J McCallion)	287	206	No Help From Dad FC	(Mr A Duggan)	27
28	Jones Boys One	(ML Jones)	315	138	Soccer Superstars	(Chris Forde)	287	206	Tao Fan	(Mary Ann Kennedy)	27
29	Raj Is Back To Kill	(Mr R Gohli)	315	138	Forley's Flists	(Andy Robson)	287	206	Warpaid XI	(David McLean)	27
29	Nobby 4	(J Brown)	315	138	Club B-30 Tosses	(PA Amos)	286	211	Alphites Foot	(Mr K Simpson)	27
31	Nobby 32	(J Brown)	315	143	Gestalt	(Richard Rowe)	286	211	Posters Raiders	(Mr P M Hendley)	27
33	Jones Boys 8	(Mr J Swirles)	314	143	Adhesive Storm	(P Mills)	285	211	Am's Allstars	(I W Donaldson)	27
34	J S August Monthly 1	(Mr J Swirles)	313	145	Tagues 1st XI	(R Brown)	285	211	Bricks Mart XI	(A Bang)	27
34	Team A	(Mr A Lone)	313	145	4 & 2	(R Brown)	285	211	The Fubars	(N Scott)	27
34	Beaston Celtic	(Barry McGovern)	313	145	Daues Dames	(Mr D Lightowler)	285	211	Hede Yuck Split	(Mr I Roberts)	27
34	Nobby 5	(J Brown)	313	145	Forley's Seconds	(Chris Forde)	285	211	Kinky Imports	(Scott Foster)	27
38	Hull Red Devils	(G Foster)	312	145	Robe Boys 1	(R Golder)	285	211	I Hate Alan Hansen	(V Cox)	27
38	Ab 4	(A Boydell)	312	145	1	(Martin Cortina)	285	211	Skyline Stabers	(T Gordon)	27
40	Nonchalant A F C 3	(Mr RL Wierd)									

The ITF players, their points and their values if you are considering the transfer option

10101	M Watt	Aberdeen	1.50	0 +3
10102	N Walker	Aberdeen	1.00	0 +3
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	0 +27
10202	V Bartram	Arsenal	0.75	0 +0
10203	J Laidie	Arsenal	0.75	0 -17
10301	M Smith	Aston Villa	3.50	+5 +6
10302	M Oakes	Aston Villa	1.00	0 +19
10401	T Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 -19
10402	S Given	Blackburn Rovers	2.00	0 -1
10501	G Marshall	Blackburn Rovers	3.50	0 -1
10502	S Kerr	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	+5 +5
10601	D Kharine	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0 +10
10602	K Hinchcock	Blackburn Rovers	2.00	0 -20
10603	F Groves	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	-1 -6
10701	S Ogrtovic	Coventry City	1.50	+4 -15
10702	J Fife	Coventry City	0.50	0 +0
10801	M Taylor	Derby County	1.00	0 +0
10802	R Hout	Derby County	1.00	-6 -16
10901	A Maxwell	Dundee United	0.50	0 +4
10902	L Kory	Dundee United	0.50	0 +0
11001	N Westwater	Dunfermline	0.50	-2 -32
11101	N Southall	Everton	2.50	+10 +1
11102	P Gerrard	Everton	2.50	0 +1
11201	G Rouse	Everton	2.00	-7 -17
11202	J Laidie	Hibernian	1.50	+5 -2
11301	D Skolovic	Kilmarnock	1.00	-1 -21
11302	M Bennett	Kilmarnock	1.50	0 +0
11401	P Evans	Leeds United	0.25	0 +0
11402	N Martyn	Leeds United	2.50	+5 +13
11501	K Poole	Leeds United	1.00	0 -8
11502	K Kellie	Leeds United	1.00	-3 -8
11601	D James	Liverpool	5.00	-3 +8
11701	P Schmeichel	Liverpool	0.50	0 +0
11702	R Van Der Gouw	Manchester United	5.00	+4 -12
11801	G Walsh	Middlesbrough	1.50	0 +0
11802	A Miller	Middlesbrough	1.50	0 -23
11901	S Howie	Motherwell	1.50	0 -19
12001	S Hisslop	Newcastle United	4.00	0 -3
12002	S Hisslop	Newcastle United	3.00	-3 -2
12101	M Croxall	Nottingham Forest	2.50	-8 -31
12102	A Fitts	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0 +0
12201	T Wright	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0 +0
12301	S Thomson	Raith Rovers	0.50	-5 -14
12401	A Gorm	Rangers	5.00	+4 +13
12501	K Pressman	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	-2 +3
12502	M Clarke	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0 +0
12601	D Bennett	Southampton	1.00	-1 -17
12602	M Kinnear	Southampton	0.25	0 +2
12701	C Woods	Southampton	1.50	0 -19
12702	L Perez	Sunderland	0.50	-11 -19
12801	T Coffey	Sunderland	1.00	0 +9
12802	I Walker	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	-1 +16
12901	E Barendse	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0 +0
12902	L Millis	West Ham United	2.00	-5 -21
13001	N Sullivan	West Ham United	0.50	0 +5
13002	P Head	Wimbledon	1.00	-9 +3
13003	P Head	Wimbledon	1.00	0 +0

20101	S McKinnlie	Aberdeen	2.00	0+11
20201	L Dixon	Aberdeen	3.00	0+20
20202	N Winterburn	Aberdeen	3.00	-1+18
20203	S Morrow	Aberdeen	1.00	-1+3
20301	S Sturton	Aston Villa	3.00	+4+28
20302	A Wright	Aston Villa	3.00	+4+32
20303	G Charles	Aston Villa	2.50	0 0
20304	P King	Aston Villa	0.25	0 0
20305	F Nelson	Aston Villa	3.00	+1+25
20401	H Berg	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 +8
20402	G Le Saux	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 +1
20403	J Kenna	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0 +1
20404	G Croft	Blackburn Rovers	1.50	0 +2
20501	J McKinnara	Celtic	3.00	0 +7
20502	T McKinlay	Celtic	3.00	+4 +2
20601	D Petrescu	Chelsea	3.00	-1 +4
20602	S Clarke	Chelsea	2.00	0 +2
20603	T Phelan	Chelsea	2.00	0 0
20604	S Minto	Chelsea	1.00	0 +1
20701	D Burrows	Coventry City	1.50	0 -7
20702	S Borrowes	Coventry City	1.00	0 -5
20704	M Hall	Coventry City	1.00	0 +4
20705	R Gensau	Coventry City	1.50	0 -2
20801	C Powell	Derby County	1.50	-2 +1
20802	D Yates	Derby County	1.00	-1 +1
20804	P Parker	Derby County	1.00	0 +4
20901	M Macleod	Dundee United	1.00	0+16
20902	M Perry	Dundee United	0.50	0+8
20903	N Duffy	Dundee United	0.50	0 +7
21001	C Miller	Dunfermline	0.25	-1 -7
21002	A Tod	Dunfermline	0.25	-1 -10
21101	M Hoggler	Everton	2.50	0 0
21102	A Hinchcliffe	Everton	2.00	+5+14
21103	E Barrett	Everton	1.50	+8+18
21104	M Jackson	Everton	0 1.00	0 0
21201	S Locke	Everton	2.00	0 0
21202	N Poulton	Everton	1.00	-3 -5
21301	W Miller	Hibernian	1.00	0 +2
21302	A Dow	Hibernian	1.00	+4+18
21402	G MacPherson	Kilmarnock	0.50	0 -10
21501	G Kelly	Leeds United	3.00	+3+20
21502	T Dorog	Leeds United	2.50	0 -1
21503	P Beesley	Leeds United	0.50	+4+17
21601	G Helle	Leeds United	1.00	+3 +3
21601	M Whitlow	Leeds United	0.50	0 +8
21602	S Grayson	Leeds United	0.50	-1 +7
21603	N Lewis	Leeds United	0.50	0 -2
21804	F Redding	Leeds United	0.25	0 0
21701	R Jones	Liverpool	3.00	0 0
21702	S Howie	Liverpool	1.50	0 0
21703	S Bjornnesby	Liverpool	0.50	-1+24
21801	D Irwin	Manchester United	4.00	+4+18
21802	G Neville	Manchester United	3.00	+4+13
21803	P Neville	Manchester United	3.00	+4 +2
21901	N Cox	Middlesbrough	2.50	0 -11
21903	C Morris	Middlesbrough	1.50	0 -1
21904	C Fleming	Middlesbrough	0.75	-4 -5
21905	C Blackmore	Middlesbrough	0.25	0 0
22001	S McKinnon	Middlesbrough	0.50	-2 +3
22101	W Barton	Newcastle United	3.00	0 -1
22102	S Watson	Newcastle United	3.00	-1+13
22103	R Elliott	Newcastle United	2.50	-1 +2
22104	J Beesford	Newcastle United	2.50	0 +7
22201	S Pearce	Nottingham Forest	4.00	0 +2
22202	D Lytle	Nottingham Forest	2.00	-4 -8
22203	A Hesland	Nottingham Forest	1.00	+3 +7
22204	N Jerkin	Nottingham Forest	2.00	-1 0
22301	P Bowe	Raith Rovers	0.75	0 +8
22302	D Kirkwood	Raith Rovers	0.50	0 -5
22401	D Robertson	Raith Rovers	2.50	+5+11
22402	J Brown	Rangers	2.00	0 0
22403	I Nolan	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	+3+15
22502	P Atherton	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0+18
22503	S Nicol	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0 0
22504	D Stefanovic	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0 +5
22505	L Briscoe	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0 0
22601	J Dodd	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0 -5
22602	F Benall	Sheffield Wednesday	0.75	-1 -7
22603	S Charlton	Sunderland	0.75	0 +0
22701	D Kubicki	Sunderland	0.50	-4 +9
22702	M Scott	Sunderland	0.25	-4 +4
22703	G Hall	Sunderland	0.50	0 -1
22801	D Austin	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0 0
22802	C Wilson	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0+23
22803	J Edinburgah	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	0 +12
22804	D Kerslake	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0 0
22805	S Carr	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	0 +4
22901	J Dicks	West Ham United	1.00	0+210
22902	T Briscoe	West Ham United	1.00	0 +4
22903	K Rowland	West Ham United	1.00	-3 0
22904	M Bowen	West Ham United	1.00	-2 0
22905	K Brown	West Ham United	0.50	0 0
23001	B Thatcher	Wimbledon	1.50	0 +9
23002	A Kinnle	Wimbledon	0.75	-5 +3
23003	K Cunningham	Wimbledon	0.75	-2+14
23004	D Jupp	Wimbledon	0.75	0 0
23006	C Perry	Wimbledon	0.25	-3+18

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Points	Value
30101	B Irvine	Aberdeen	2.00	-2+10	
30102	C Woodthorpe	Aberdeen	1.50	0 -3	
30201	T Adams	Arsenal	4.00	0+16	
30202	S Bould	Arsenal	3.00	-1+18	
30301	M Keown	Arsenal	1.00	-1 +8	
30302	A Livingston	Arsenal	1.00	0 +0	
30303	S Marshall	Arsenal	1.00	0 +0	
30304	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.50	0+16	



Beesley, the Leeds United defender, tackles Michael Branch, of Everton. Leeds have had five successive clean sheets.

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Wks	Pts	Av
30302	U Ebiogu	Aston Villa	3.00	+4	+37	
30304	C Tiller	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+9	
30305	R Scimeca	Aston Villa	1.00	+4	+17	
30401	C Hendry	Blackburn Rovers	4.00	0	+1	
30402	I Pearce	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	0	
30403	C Coleman	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	-3	
30404	N Mariner	Blackburn Rovers	0.50	0	+2	
30501	T Boyd	Celtic	3.00	+4	+14	
30502	M MacKay	Celtic	1.50	0	+2	
30503	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.50	+4	+15	
30504	B O'Neill	Celtic	3.00	+4	+5	
30601	M Duberry	Chelsea	2.50			
30602	F Labovut	Chelsea	2.50	0	+13	
30603	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00	0	-2	
30604	D Lee	Chelsea	2.00	0	+3	
30605	A Myers	Chelsea	1.50	0	+5	
30606	E Johnson	Chelsea	1.50	0	+10	
30701	L Daiseh	Coventry City	2.00	+4	+4	
30702	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	+4	+3	
30801	I Stinson	Derby County	2.50	-4	-8	
30802	D Wassell	Derby County	1.00	0	0	
30803	P McGrath	Derby County	2.50	0	+1	
30804	J Laurson	Derby County	1.00	-1	+5	
30805	M Carbin	Derby County	0.50	0	-1	
30901	S Pressley	Dundee United	1.00	0	+14	
31001	M Miller	Dunfermline	0.75	-1	+2	
31002	I Den Blamen	Dunfermline	0.75	-2	-12	
31101	D Unsworth	Everton	2.50	+3	+13	
31102	D Watson	Everton	2.50	+8	+10	
31103	C Short	Everton	2.00	0	+9	
31201	D McPherson	Everton	1.00	0	+8	
31202	P Ritchie	Everton	1.00	-4	+12	
31301	J McLaughlin	Hibernian	0.50	0	-4	
31302	G Hunter	Hibernian	0.50	+7	+11	
31401	M Reilly	Kilmarnock	1.00	-1	+1	
31402	R Montgomery	Kilmarnock	0.75	0	-1	
31501	D Wetherall	Leeds United	2.50	+4	+19	
31502	R Johnson	Leeds United	1.00	0	+2	
31503	L Radcliffe	Leeds United	1.00	+1	+12	
31601	J Pemberton	Leeds United	0.50	0	0	
31602	S Walsh	Leeds United	1.00	0	+8	
31701	J Walsh	Leeds United	1.00	0	+8	
31702	P Kinnear	Leeds United	0.50	-1	-1	
31801	S Prior	Liverpool	3.50	-1	+12	
31802	P Babb	Liverpool	3.50	-1	+12	
31901	M Wright	Liverpool	3.50	0	+15	
31902	N Ruddock	Liverpool	3.00	-1	+10	
31903	D Matthews	Liverpool	1.00	0	+14	
32001	G Palfrey	Manchester United	3.50	+1	+2	
32002	D May	Manchester United	3.00	+3	+13	
32101	R Johnson	Manchester United	2.50	0	+10	
32102	N Pearson	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-9	
32201	S Vickers	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-7	
32202	D Whyte	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-13	
32301	P Whelan	Middlesbrough	0.75	-2	-4	
32302	B Martin	Middlesbrough	1.50	-2	-2	
32401	M Van Der Gaag	Motherwell	0.75	-3	-8	
32402	P Albert	Newcastle United	4.50	-1	+10	
32501	S Howie	Newcastle United	3.00	0	+7	
32502	D Paddock	Newcastle United	3.00	-1	+13	
32601	C Cooper	Nottingham Forest	3.00	-3	-3	
32602	S Chelver	Nottingham Forest	2.50	0	+2	
32701	S Blackthorn	Nottingham Forest	1.00	0	-19	
32702	S Davis	Raith Rovers	3.50	0	-19	
32801	R Gough	Rangers	3.50	-1	-7	
32802	A McLaren	Rangers	3.00	0	0	
32803	J Bjornlund	Rangers	3.50	0	+17	
32804	G Petric	Rangers	2.50	-1	+13	
32901	J Newsome	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+6	
32902	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+17	
32903	B Lingham	Sheffield Wednesday	0.25	0	0	
33001	N Monkou	Southampton	1.50	0	-14	
33002	A Nelson	Southampton	1.00	0	-2	
33003	R Dryden	Southampton	0.50	-1	-4	
33004	C Lundqvist	Southampton	0.50	0	-11	
33005	U Van Goober	Southampton	1.00	0	+17	
33101	A McVitie	Sunderland	1.00	-4	+14	
33102	K Ball	Sunderland	0.75	-4	+10	
33201	R Ord	Sunderland	0.50	-4	+10	
33202	S Campbell	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	0	+23	
33301	J Scallan	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	0	0	
33302	C Calderwood	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	-1	+19	
33303	G Mabbett	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	0	
33304	K Scott	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
33305	S Nethercott	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	-3	
33401	S Bili	West Ham United	2.50	-2	+3	
33402	M Ripper	West Ham United	2.50	-2	+3	
33403	S Potts	West Ham United	2.00	0	-3	
33404	R Hall	West Ham United	1.50	0	0	
33405	R Fordland	West Ham United	0.50	0	0	
33501	A Reeves	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0	
33502	A Pearce	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0	
33503	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	0.50	-4	+4	
33504	B McAllister	Wimbledon	0.50	-1	+11	
33505	S Fitzgibbon	Wimbledon	0.25	0	0	

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Flt	Wk	Ob
40101	D Windass	Aberdeen	3.00	+1	+24	
40102	S Glass	Aberdeen	3.00	+1	+9	
40103	P Bernard	Aberdeen	2.50	+1	+4	
40104	I Kiriakov	Aberdeen	2.50	+1	+21	
40105	T Tsvetanov	Aberdeen	0.50	+1	+18	
40201	D Platt	Arsenal	4.50	+1	+20	
40202	P Merson	Arsenal	4.00	+1	+32	
40203	R Parfou	Arsenal	2.00	0	+3	
40204	A Holder	Arsenal	1.50	0	0	
40205	I Sealey	Arsenal	0.50	0	0	
40206	P Vieira	Arsenal	3.00	0	+13	
40209	R Garcia	Arsenal	2.00	+1	+1	
40301	M Draper	Aston Villa	4.00	+2	+17	
40302	A Townsend	Aston Villa	2.50	+2	+27	
40303	I Taylor	Aston Villa	2.50	+4	+20	
40304	G Farrelly	Aston Villa	1.00	0	0	
40306	S Duric	Aston Villa	3.50	+1	+3	
40401	J Wilcox	Blackburn Rovers	4.00	0	+16	
40402	L Bohinen	Blackburn Rovers	3.50	0	+19	
40403	G Fillolett	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+10	
40404	B McKinlay	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+4	
40405	T Sherwood	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+17	
40406	P Warhurst	Blackburn Rovers	1.50	0	+3	
40407	G Donis	Blackburn Rovers	1.50	0	+14	
40408	S Ripley	Blackburn Rovers	0.50	0	+30	
40409	M Holmes	Blackburn Rovers	0.75	0	0	
40501	P McStay	Celtic	3.00	0	0	
40502	A Parfou	Celtic	2.50	+2	+21	

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

TUESDAY DECEMBER 24 1996

Northern's fate to be decided today

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE fate of Northern Electric was in the balance as the Takeover Panel's full executive committee held an emergency meeting last night to consider the company's plea for independence.

The panel was meeting to rule on Northern's request to overturn an extension to the bid period which will give control to CE Electric, which is bidding £782 million.

Northern shares were suspended but lobbying of institutions by the two sides continued after the deadline was extended on Friday night to today.

The panel is mounting a full investigation into a fee paid by Northern to BZW, one of its advisers.

The outcome of the bitterly contested bid by CE Electric hangs on whether the Takeover Panel's executive committee overturns a decision made late on Friday night to extend the bid period to this lunchtime.

Northern is fighting the move because by lunchtime on Friday — the original deadline for bid acceptances — it had retained independence after CE Electric captured only

49.77 per cent of shares. By the weekend CE Electric said that late acceptances had pushed it to victory with 50.33 per cent.

The panel's bid extension and the challenge by Northern take the takeover into uncharted territory and effectively means that the Takeover Panel, which oversees procedure in takeovers and mergers, has the last word in whether Northern remains independent.

Northern moved yesterday morning to appeal against the decision to extend the bid period, made after the Panel is believed to have become concerned over the "discretionary" payment of £250,000 to BZW by Northern. The payment is made in addition to a flat rate fee of £1.5 million for work on the bid defence.

At the heart of the issue is whether the payment, which BZW said was not performance-related, was connected with the controversial purchase of shares by BZW and Schroders. Both sets of advisers have been prevented from buying further shares although the panel had cleared their

initial purchases. The purchase of more than 2 per cent of Northern's shares had a crucial effect on the outcome of the bid as it stood on Friday afternoon.

The fee payment to BZW has been frozen and Northern's shares were suspended pending the panel appeal. The panel is refusing to give its reasons officially for the bid extension until after the outcome of the appeal.

BZW is refusing to comment on its own appeal, which is thought to have been made separately from Northern.

The discretionary payment was made known to the panel on Friday, the last day of the bid and the day when advisers are customarily paid.

It is possible the Securities and Futures Authority will become involved if the Takeover Panel finds any improper action from BZW. A spokesman for the broker said it would co-operate with the investigation fully. He said: "We would expect full exoneration."

Northern and CE Electric both continued to fight for the support of institutions and individual shareholders yesterday. With the bid extended until 1pm today the fate of Northern could still be sealed by withdrawal of acceptances.

The Takeover Panel's decision will be final although Northern could seek a higher appeal through a judicial review. However, this course of action is not thought likely.

The Director-General of the panel is Alistair Defries who headed the corporate finance team that defended Northern Electric against its first hostile bid from Trafalgar House.

Pennington, page 23

Sears on brink of Freemans deal

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SEARS, the retailing group, is close to agreeing the sale of its Freemans home shopping business to Littlewoods, Sears revealed yesterday.

Littlewoods, the family-owned retailing and pools business, is expected to pay between £350 million and £400 million for Freemans.

It has had to beat off other bidders, believed to include Otto Versand, of Germany; N Brown, the mail order specialist chaired by Sir David Alliance; and Great Universal Stores, Britain's largest mail order company.

The sale is conditional on the agreement of terms and the approval of Sears shareholders. The Office of Fair Trading would also have to indicate that it does not intend to refer the bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Littlewoods is understood to have been in touch with the OFT in the last few days. It is thought the deal is unlikely to be referred because a combined Free-

mans and Littlewoods would still be smaller than GUS. Littlewoods has a market share of about 30 per cent, while GUS controls some 35 per cent of the market.

Sears, which includes the Selfridges, Warehouse, Wals and British Shoe Corporation businesses, is expected to return to shareholders cash raised from the deal. The City remained unexcited by the news of progress, however, with Sears shares edging up just 1p to 89.5p, and Liam Strong, chief executive of the sprawling group, remains under pressure to improve its performance.

Both Littlewoods and Freemans specialise in agency mail order. The companies publish large catalogues and pay fees to agencies who place orders on behalf of friends and family. The agency business is in decline but still makes up by far the largest part of the mail order sector.

Temps, page 24

LucasVarity finance chief replaced after four months

By ERIC REGULY

JOHN GRANT has been ousted as finance director of LucasVarity, four months after Lucas and Varity merged to form one of the world's largest automotive components groups. He left with share options and compensation totalling £1.6 million.

LucasVarity said Mr Grant, 49, the former finance director of Lucas Industries, was told after a board meeting last Wednesday that he was to be replaced by Neil Arnold, also 49, who was Varity's chief financial officer. A spokesman said: "The board concluded that the company wanted someone with more international experience and outlook."

Analysts, however, said that Mr Grant was marked simply because "he was a Lucas man". Although the companies came together in a one-for-one share



Grant: "a Lucas man"

swap, Varity is beginning to exert management control over the group. Mr Grant's departure reduces the number of LucasVarity board members to ten, giving equal representation to each company.

Mr Grant was on a two-year rolling contract and will be paid about £575,000 in salary

and other benefits. He also leaves with 800,000 share options, most granted at 95p. At yesterday's closing price of 226.5p, down 6p, the options are worth about £1 million.

Mr Grant joined Lucas in 1992 after a career at Ford of Europe in the treasury and business strategy departments. He was not available to comment about his plans.

Mr Arnold joined Varity, formerly Massey Ferguson, 26 years ago, starting in the Perkins engines division in Peterborough. In 1975, he moved to the head office in Canada, where he joined the finance department, and became treasurer in 1981. He played a key role in the restructuring of the near-bankrupt company, which involved debt negotiations with 250 lenders and four governments, in the 1980s. In 1990, he became Varity's chief financial officer.



Twice the day before Christmas... a costumed Bifu official explains why it is calling a strike at Lloyds Bank today

Bifu invokes the Santa clause

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

THE Banking Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu) enlisted Santa Claus yesterday to tell Lloyds TSB customers in the City of London why it is calling for its 16,000 members at the bank to strike this afternoon.

Bifu is protesting at the bank's plans to keep branches open until 4.30pm, in spite of

a traditional agreement to close at lunchtime on Christmas Eve. The bank did not know how many branches would be affected but said all cashpoint machines should be working.

Bifu claimed the bank had largely backed down by agreeing to let many people go earlier than 4.30pm. A spokes-

man for the union said: "We don't think there will be any customers to be disrupted." A Bifu spokesman said there would be no pickets outside branches. "The idea is to get as many people home as soon as possible."

NatWest staff last week rejected Bifu's strike calls. Its branches will stay open until

3.30pm today. Barclays said most of its 2,000 branches would be open in the afternoon, but local management could arrange to close if there was insufficient demand.

16,000 Bifu members are due to strike on January 2 in Scotland against the bank's moves to change the bank holiday.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET MOVES

FTSE 100	6057.2	(+9.6)
Yield	3.56%	
FTSE All share	1998.06	(+4.36)
Nikkei	Closed	
New York		
Dow Jones	8502.47	(+18.07)
S&P Composite	748.54	(+0.33)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	98 1/2%	(98 1/2%)
Yield	6.57%	(6.52%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Life long gilt	100%	(100%)
Future (Mar)	100%	(100%)

STERLING

New York	1.6718	(1.6708)
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London	1.6738	(1.6687)
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DM	2.5998	(2.5889)
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FF	6.7700	(6.7452)
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SP	1.3370	(1.3340)
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Yen	190.72	(190.28)
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S Index	94.5	(94.1)
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DOLLAR

London	1.6683	(1.6618)
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DM	8.2503	(8.2375)
----	--------	----------

SP	1.3370	(1.3340)
----	--------	----------

Yen	114.10	(114.35)
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S Index	98.3	(98.4)
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Tokyo close Yen 114.80

COMMODITIES

Oil (WTI)	22.50	(22.50)
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Brent 15-day Mar	22.70	(22.90)
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GOLD

London close	388.88	(388.35)
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* denotes midday trading price

New deal

The Industrial Society today urges unions and employers to agree an employment charter, called New Deal at Work, covering pay, hours and industrial relations. Page 22

BA settles

British Airways has agreed to settle a dispute with Caledonian Airways over aircraft maintenance at a cost of £6 million. Caledonian's parent company says the disruption cost the company £17 million. Page 23

George's fear for inflation target

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

EDDIE GEORGE, Governor of the Bank of England, warned the Chancellor that the small rate rise of late October might not be enough to give a better than even chance of hitting his inflation target.

In the minutes of the October 30 monetary meeting, after which base rates were raised a quarter point to 6 per cent, the Governor cited accelerating economic growth and the failure of inflation to fall back as had been expected as key reasons behind his recommendation of a rate rise.

He intimated that a further

monetary tightening might be needed but also noted that raising rates earlier than the markets had been expecting would have a "relatively strong signal effect on the credibility of policy".

He added: "That would reduce the size and speed of the rise in rates that might eventually be necessary to make the inflation target secure and sustain the economic expansion."

His comments appear to be consistent with remarks made subsequently, notably in testimony before the Treasury Select Committee earlier this

month. He said that rates may have to rise again but the need was not dramatic or urgent.

For his part, the minutes show that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, agreed with the Governor's recommendation. However, the two men disagreed fundamentally on the impact of sterling's appreciation on the monetary situation, leaving the way open for potential disagreement on rates in the new year.

The Bank argued that, while sterling's strength might offset some domestically generated inflationary pressures, it did nothing directly to address the

source of these pressures — namely an upswing in domestic demand. Sterling's rise was not, in itself, a tightening of monetary policy. In contrast, Mr Clarke and his advisers argued it did tighten policy.

The timing of any further rate rise is uncertain. The two men meet again on January 15 and, if under pressure from the Bank to raise rates, Mr Clarke may move swiftly to avoid such an unpopular step too close to the election. On the other hand, the Chancellor may wait until February's monetary meeting when he will have the benefit of fourth-quarter growth figures.

RJB plans to lift earnings with £34m share buyback

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

RJB MINING, the independent coal producer whose shares fell sharply after a profit downgrade by its broker earlier this month, has announced plans for a £34 million share buyback.

Shares of RJB, Britain's largest independent coal producer, fell 23 per cent to 372.5p from 485p after BZW sharply downgraded its profits forecast for the next two years.

Gordon McFee, RJB's finance director, said the company wanted the ability to lift earnings per share through a buyback while the share price was subdued. Yesterday it stood at 439p after recovering ground from its fall. Mr McFee said a 5 per cent buyback could deliver an earnings per share increase of about four per cent on yesterday's price. The buyback re-

quires the approval of shareholders at a special meeting next month.

The buyback will stretch to the limit the company's jurisdiction: for buying back its shares after a £94 million repurchase in July. Companies are allowed to buy a maximum of 15 per cent of

their own shares in a full year with the permission of their shareholders.

RJB's share price has recovered in the past 12 months from a high of 645p to the low of 372.5p. BZW downgraded profits because of cheap coal imports and production problems at one of its collieries.

RJB will soon renegotiate important contracts with the electricity generators — the first to be discussed in the privatised electricity industry. Despite its success since buying the bulk of British Coal's mines, RJB faces increasing competition from gas as a fuel for electricity generation. The generators were originally locked into contracts to buy British coal, but these expire in 1998.

BOXING DAY

IN
THE TIMES

In The Times on Boxing Day find out how tens of thousands of building society customers are making money bonuses averaging £7,000 each. Also financial market updates and news stories

Pennington, page 23

The Complete Bedroom Shop

SALE

Starts 27th December

Hundreds of genuine Reductions on
Bedsteads, Mattresses & Divans,
Accessory Furniture & exquisite Linens,
many at HALF Price!

From our Empire Range Chateaufort
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was £2050
Now £1040

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Double Pocket Divan Set
was £2325
Now £1625

Gothic style Bedstead in Hand
Forged Iron
was £895
Now £760

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contact our showrooms at
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Stourbridge 0192 437 4717, Harrogate 0143 350 3060
Esher, Surrey 0137 246 4828, Newark 0195 677 4881
Roke (nr. Peterborough) 01753 089 4754

And So To Bed Studios at
Middleborough 0164 223 0988, Bath 0122544 4554
Newcastle 0191 261 6969, Grimsby 0147 235 3251

Employees get chance to become traders in the perks market

Fraser Nelson reports on the American system of flexible benefits tipped to grow over here

Office parties, flu epidemics and desperate attempts to use unclaimed holidays before the year end have long been traditional ingredients of the corporate Christmas. The hangers-on and snifflers remain, but the choice between using or losing holiday allowance is gradually dying out. Its replacement is a US-style benefits system that invites workers to exchange unused holiday for healthcare, extra pension or hard cash. The flexible benefits system is designed to release the difference between what a perk costs the company and what it is worth to the employee. The worker is given a fixed budget with which to pick from the benefits menu, and pocket any change. Although the system is used by nearly half of US companies, it is taking a long time to reach Britain. It represents little short of a revolution in remuneration culture, replacing the UK's traditional paternalistic benefits system and empowering the employee. However, the arguments for the new system are becoming hard to ignore. Workers no longer expect jobs for life and now turn up at interview with their own life cover, pensions and healthcare scheme. Additional benefits mean duplication, unnecessary handouts and what is becoming, for companies, a waste. Although British firms are hesitant to plunge into a fully flexible system, a growing number, including Lloyds TSB, are prepared to sample it. The bank's overall benefits are not flexible, but it has extended the shelf-life of holiday allowance from 12 to 15 months. Barclays Bank goes further, with unused holiday valid for life. Its holiday float lets staff keep up to five days' holiday allowance on ice indefinitely. KPMG runs a holiday "bank", whose currency is overtime. Each

extra hour employees work is credited to their leisure account, from which a holiday can be withdrawn. Companies are not, however, throwing other benefits. Mercury Communications is alone among blue chip companies in having a full-blooded, money-on-the-table system of flexible benefits. Its 18-month-old system takes in everything from life assurance to child-care vouchers. Employees can trade benefits to fit their lifestyle. The most frequently traded of Mercury's benefits is holiday. Twenty-five days are standard issue, of which employees can sell up to five. Alternatively, other benefits can be traded in for more holiday, to a maximum of 30 days. A quarter of Mercury staff have traded their holidays this year, with sellers outnumbering buyers. Whereas the Barclays holiday bank is open only to those with 15 years' service, Mercury's system includes everyone, including part-timers. They are offered a mini-flex system, in which they can buy and sell hours per week, rather than days per year. The cash value of each holiday is found by dividing basic salary by working days. To Mercury, all days are equal: it pays out the same for Christmas Eve as for any day. In the US, some firms buy back holidays at a sharp premium to the selling price, to lure workers back from vacation in times of need. This has given rise to holiday futures traders. Canny employees can request holidays when they expect things to be busy, using credits in their holiday bank. If they bet correctly, the firm may buy back the holiday for twice the amount paid for it. A fledgling system can have defects, as the Royal Mail discovered when it pioneered a "cafeteria" benefits package four years ago. John Millidge, then its head of pay, turned to a flexible system to revamp an ailing benefits package. "Our managers had good basic salaries, but lousy perks," he said. "We were having real problems recruiting." He recalls: "To start with, it

didn't work terribly well. Drivers with poor insurance records opted for company cars, which ended up being quite expensive. And we found that the walking wounded were claiming the health insurance, which also hit us quite badly. "But we learned an incredible amount. People who lived in London were opting for the cash rather than the car, and when the government pay restrictions came, people could opt for more salary and maintain their standard of living by giving up their car or the healthcare." The Royal Mail found that flexible benefits can perform the fiscal alchemy of giving employees more value from their perks at the same cost to the employer. Also, freedom of choice had its own value as another bargaining chip in recruiting. From its roots as a novelty, flexible benefit is now being adopted by companies nervous about falling behind. Management consultants say that the debate in British companies has now focused on when, rather than whether, to make the switch. Carol Woodley, partner in human capital services at Arthur Andersen, forecasts that the new system will become more visible over the next year as big-name companies put long-held plans into effect. Cathy Turner, head of Ernst & Young's compensation practice, says that the collapse of tax benefits on company cars has acted as a catalyst for change. "From a company's perspective, the advantage of the system is that it gives more choice to the employee while leaving the power completely in the firm's hands," she says. "British companies are now emerging from three years of downsizing, and those who may need extra help will find it useful to buy a few more days of their workers' time."

Industrial Society calls for new deal at work

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BRITAIN needs a new deal at work, based on a partnership between employers and employees, business and trade union leaders say today. The call for a new jobs framework based around a new employment charter comes from the Industrial Society, the joint employer-employee body seeking improved workplace relations. In their call for a new deal, leaders of the Industrial Society, which brings together business, union and other leaders on a range of training, work and similar issues, believe they are seizing on a new consensus for co-operation before the general election. But in its emphasis on mutual rights and responsibilities, the society's new employment charter may well be viewed suspiciously by government ministers, who are likely to regard it as too closely in line with the proposals for partnership at work being put forward by Tony Blair, the Labour leader. Labour's employment campaign in the election will centre on the adoption of minimum standards at work, and the society today says that in an era of globalisation and

free trade, minimum standards are essential for the benefit of employers and employees alike. In terms highly reminiscent of those of Labour leaders, Jo Gardiner, Industrial Society campaigns manager, says: "We will not survive by ratcheting down standards of conduct, terms and conditions for short-term gains." The society rejects as "unhelpful and unworkable" the proposals for further changes in employee relations put forward in the Government's latest green paper on strikes and trade unions, and says that the proposals are themselves a disproportionate reaction to the outbreak of strikes in the summer. Ms Gardiner says: "We are not going to find the solutions we need in the past. What we need is a new deal at work. The time is right, the potential partners are ready."

"For UK businesses and organisations, civilised productive partnerships between employers and employees will be the only route to future long-term competitiveness." The society's employment charter, which it says is aimed at moving the argument over industrial relations and employment rights forwards rather than backwards, says that employees are entitled to fair pay and benefits, regular consultation and working arrangements which balance work and home, together with other provisions. In return, employees should operate responsibly, resolve any disagreements constructively and work flexibly, accommodating new ideas and practices. John Monks, TUC General Secretary, says: "The choice is clear: unions and employers can continue with adversarial relationships, or they can move to co-operation." John Edmonds, leader of the GMB general union, says there is now the "best chance for 15 years" we'd better go for it. For employers, the CBI says: "Employers need an initiative to build up momentum in employee relations practices."



Colin Hook said the company was in a stronger position than a year or two ago

Ivory & Sime sees fall of 12% in funds at half time

By Gavin Lumsden

IVORY & SIME, the investment group, yesterday blamed the rise in sterling and economic weakness in Asia for a 12 per cent fall in funds under its management in the six months to October 31. The company, which manages more than half of its assets overseas, saw its funds fall £500 million to £3.7 billion, a rise of just 2.9 per cent over 12 months. This was exacerbated by BAA's decision to take £200 million of its pension fund money away from Ivory & Sime. Nevertheless, Colin Hook, managing director, said the company hoped to launch

a new Asian investment trust next year. Ivory & Sime manages £1.5 billion in segregated pension funds and £2.3 billion in 15 investment trusts. Despite the setbacks, Mr Hook said the revenue stream remained steady with pre-tax profits up 27.7 per cent to £3.7 million. The company also announced a 14 per cent increase in the interim dividend to 2.85p, payable on January 31, and said the final dividend would not be less than 5.75p. Earnings per share were 7.60p, up 19.3 per cent. Mr Hook said: "The company is

Post Office profits to soar after record Christmas

By Oliver August

A RECORD number of Christmas cards and letters has been delivered to the nation, positioning the Post Office for further earnings increases after the rise in interim pre-tax profits from £170 million to £230 million. The number of seasonal greetings has hit the two billion mark for the first time, beating last year's 1.8 billion.

Mail volumes peaked on December 16, when more than 128 million items were posted — the largest number of letters ever posted in a single day in the Post Office's 350-year history. Post Office profits will be used to satisfy the Treasury's 1996-97 cash requirement, which this financial year amounts to nearly £300 million, and to pay corporation tax.

The basic price of stamps was increased by 1p last summer in direct response to the growing cash demands of the Government, according to the Post Office.

A spokesman said: "The Post Office and all its businesses will have to work hard for the rest of the financial year if we are to meet the Government's demanding cash and efficiency targets. The cash target amounts to £1 million every working day."

In the six months to September 28, turnover increased from £2.9 billion to £3 billion in spite of several one-day strikes. During the four-week Christmas period, more than 250 million parcels have been delivered by Parcelforce, a 20 per cent increase on 1995. The company has to nearly double the number of night-time flights to distribute the post around the country during the Christmas period.

Royal Mail's fleet, SkyNet, adds an extra 25 flights to its routine 32 journeys, which is already Britain's biggest night-time charter operation.

The huge seasonal workload has been shouldered by more than 130,000 postmen and women, helped by 25,000 extras recruited for the Christmas period. Royal Mail adds an extra 2,000 vehicles to the 30,000-strong fleet to deliver the Christmas mail.

BAA unveils City rail link for Heathrow

PLANS for a £30 million rail link between Heathrow and St Pancras station in north London opening in 1999 were unveiled yesterday by BAA. The 35-minute service is aimed at improving public transport connections between the airport and the City of London, currently linked only by the Piccadilly line of the Underground from Holborn. It will operate in tandem with the £400 million Heathrow Express rail service between the airport and Paddington in west London.

The service will run four times an hour, stopping at three stations in west and north London and will cost around £9 for a single journey. From 2003 the link will also connect with Eurostar services to the Continent departing from the planned international terminal at St Pancras. However, the announcement provoked fury at Virgin Group, which has been working on its own version of the link and had hoped BAA would grant it permission to build and develop the line itself.

Green light for B&W

THE planned £600 million takeover of the Bristol & West Building Society by the Bank of Ireland has been given the go-ahead by the Government. B&W investors of more than two years' standing should receive a cash windfall of at least £500, plus an amount related to their savings balances. Other savers, together with customers with mortgage accounts, should get £250 in B&W preference shares. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said he had decided not to refer the proposal to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

American boost for S&N

SMITH & NEPHEW, the healthcare company, expects to launch Dermagraft, its bio-engineered skin replacement, in late 1997. The announcement came after the US Food and Drug Administration accepted an application for regulatory approval of Dermagraft for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers. Clinical trials showed healing time fell in patients who used the product. S&N and Advanced Tissue Sciences of America have formed a joint venture to develop Dermagraft.

Littlewoods stores sold

ARGENT, the property investment company, has acquired seven Littlewoods department stores for a total consideration of £32.2 million. The stores have been leased back to Littlewoods on new 25-year leases at an aggregate initial rent of £2.46 million. The stores are located in Bristol, Chesham, Glasgow, Kirkcaldy, Lewisham, Oldham and Weston-Super-Mare. Argent shares rose 8p to 406½p yesterday.

Robeco buys manager

ROBECO GROUP, The Netherlands property company, has agreed to acquire Argyle Property Asset Managers from Scottish Amicable Investment Managers for an undisclosed sum. Argyle has contracts to manage £1.7 billion of property assets. Its largest client is Scottish Amicable, with a portfolio of £950 million. Argyle will operate independently in the UK and will offer services to overseas investors who want their property investments to be managed in the UK.

Takeover talk lifts OGC

SHARES of OGC International rose 4½p to 116p after the oil and gas industry services company said it had received a takeover approach from Halliburton Co, parent company of Brown & Root International, that "may or may not lead to an offer". At yesterday's closing price, OGC is capitalised at about £70 million. The company, floated on the stock market in 1993, is 40 per cent owned by the interests of Fred Olsen, the Norwegian shipping and oil services company.

Lilleshall sells Vanplas

LILLESHALL has completed its withdrawal from the building materials supply market with the sale of Vanplas to The Laird Group for £3.15 million. Vanplas distributes plastic products for the window and building markets through 14 depots. In 1995 the business contributed operating profits of £288,000 on turnover of £14.5 million. However, trading in the current year has been disappointing, which will result in a loss. The disposal gives rise to an exceptional charge of £636,000.

NSM shares suspended

SHARES of NSM, the troubled mining company, were suspended at 8p yesterday pending clarification of its financial position. The company, which on Friday revealed it was in talks with its banks regarding working capital requirements, said it was not possible to maintain an orderly market in the shares while discussions continue. NSM is negotiating the sale of parts of its business and yesterday announced the sale of Cleve Hill, a plant hire subsidiary, to a management team.

Stagecoach buy escapes reference to MMC

STAGECOACH'S proposed purchase of Porterbrook Leasing Company has escaped a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. John Taylor, Minister for Corporate and Consumer Affairs, said yesterday that he has accepted undertakings from Stagecoach that address competition concerns identified by John Bridgeman, the Director General of Fair Trading. After the acquisition, Stagecoach will own train operating companies and a rolling stock business. Mr Bridgeman raised concerns about the potential for cross-subsidies and for discrimination and breaches of confidentiality in Porterbrook's deals with other train operators.

Liffe unveils Spitalfields plan

By Jon Ashworth

PLANS to create one of the world's biggest trading floors on the site of the former Spitalfields market in east London were unveiled yesterday — but the project may remain no more than a pipe-dream. The London International Financial Futures Exchange (Liffe) is paying an undisclosed amount to secure 35 acres of Spitalfields, which is seeking to transform itself with a mixture of offices, shops and flats. If Liffe decides to go

ahead, it plans to build a trading floor five times the size of the current Cannon Bridge operation — itself the biggest trading floor in Europe. The Spitalfields floor would compare in size with the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT), and would be backed up by 600,000 sq ft in offices and support areas. Liffe has effectively taken an option on the site and has a couple of years in which to decide whether to proceed. Any move to Spitalfields would not take place until 2001 at the earliest. Liffe has expanded enormously in

recent years and has been anxious to clear the way for a bigger exchange, trading volumes permitting. It recently merged with the London Commodities Exchange (LCE) and is to move some operations to the old Stock Exchange floor from mid-1998. The move will double Liffe's existing capacity. Daniel Hodson, Liffe's chief executive, said the Spitalfields deal removed any long-term uncertainties over Liffe's future in the City. About 157 million futures and options contracts were traded at Liffe in the 11 months to November 30,

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Sale
Australia	2.18	8.03
Austria	19.18	17.88
Belgium	46.20	81.20
Canada	2.386	2.228
Cyprus	0.815	0.780
Denmark	10.46	8.86
Finland	8.25	7.54
France	8.13	8.48
Germany	2.74	2.82
Greece	4.98	4.02
Hong Kong	131.53	12.51
Iceland	780	1.00
Ireland	5.08	0.98
Israel	1.74	1.78
Italy	2052	2520
Japan	204.70	188.70
Malta	0.38	0.38
Netherlands	3.051	2.821
New Zealand	2.51	2.51
Norway	11.31	10.51
Portugal	871.50	285.00
S. Africa	8.28	8.28
Spain	225.00	212.00
Sweden	12.06	11.26
Switzerland	12.06	11.26
Turkey	18490	17290
USA	1.788	1.588

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□ New Takeover Code already looks dated □ Fat fees on thin base of expertise □ Ignorance is risk

Panel beating overstretches rules

□ THERE is something seriously wrong when the fate of an important chunk of the country's infrastructure is decided by the votes attaching to a minute fraction of its shares, the manoeuvrings of overpaid advisers only concerned to keep themselves just barely within the rules and the decisions made under pressure by an unrepresentative regulator.

No one emerges with much credit on the last day of the bid for Northern Electric which ever way it goes, even if defeat for Northern looks the most likely outcome. CE Energy, the American bidder, arrived trailing accusations of junk bond financing that never entirely evaporated. They were then caught harassing Northern investors at home, a tactic that has no place in a civilised takeover bid.

As the timetable neared its end, the actions of its advisers looked more and more desperate. Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Schroders, acting for Northern, asked the Takeover Panel for permission to mop up spare Northern shares, to prevent them from being voted in favour of the bid. This is an allowed tactic; we will consider later if it is a legitimate one.

The Panel had to decide last week whether a £250,000 fee for BZW was linked to the share

purchase. The rules say it should not have been, and the Panel obviously had its doubts, because the timetable for the bid was, extraordinarily, extended by four days to allow more acceptances to arrive.

This was where it all went awry. If BZW had acted wrongly, the Panel could have said so and disallowed those purchases. Say, for the purposes of the bid, they do not exist, and CE would have had by Friday lunchtime a majority of the rest of the shares, and won. Instead, the Panel extended the timetable, which also meant success for the Americans, but by a different and less certain route.

This is the dilemma. The inevitable appeal yesterday by Northern means the Panel appeal committee had to decide who owns the company, which is not its true function. It is meant to be the judge, charged with ensuring fair play, and not the jury. On a strict analysis, if BZW acted according to the rules, Northern has won under those rules, and the bid fails.

Far better to have avoided the whole mess by banning market

purchases by either side. If institutions are stretching the rules to the limit, the rules need tightening. CE was able to buy a near-30 per cent holding in the market because some investors gambled that the bid would be thrown to the Monopolies Commission. This was not an investment decision, it was a straight bet, and a wrong one.

If bidders are not allowed to start with such a platform for a bid, then photo-finishes such as Northern's become, mathematically, less likely. The new edition of the *Takeover Code* has been published in the past fortnight. It already looks out of date.

Broker digs itself into a hole

□ HALF a billion in City bonuses this year, no three quarters of a billion, count it, and a billion in fees. Gosh, they must be clever, these City folk, to earn such fortunes. Worth every penny. Well, every now and then the curtain is twitched aside, and the emperor steps forward and struts his stuff.



Look at RJR Mining. This company either paid far too little for most of British Coal, or wildly overpaid. No one in the City seems quite sure, which is revealing in itself. At the end of 1994 the company paid £15 million for those coal pits. RJR had issued shares at between 250p and 340p. The shares hit a high of 625p in May; since then they have collapsed to 439p, after a 23 per cent fall one day earlier this month when the house broker, Barclays de Zoete Wedd — hi, BZW, having a good week? — cut its forecast.

Yet not a single variable, save the value of sterling which has affected every other industry in Britain, has changed since RJR bought those mines. The biggest

two factors affecting RJR's share price are and remain the world price of coal and the renegotiation of long-term contracts to supply Britain's two big fossil fuel generators by March 1998.

Opinions differ on the outcome of those negotiations. A huge chunk of the business could disappear, replaced by cheap imported coal. Against this, much of the country's generation capacity is close to RJR's fields and away from the coast, and there are physical limits to how much the generators can import.

But all this was known. Listen to *The Times* on May 30 this year and so before the shares hit that peak. "Nemesis is looming once more for Britain's coal industry. Just three years after the Government (privatised) British Coal, the corporation's new owners are wondering how to keep the much-shrunken coal industry in business."

Yet it took a note seven months later from the company's broker to correct that overblown share price. And the broker, presumably closer to the company than the rest, was so far ahead of other market forecasts up until then

because no one there had thought to take account of the importance of those contracts. Defies credibility, doesn't it?

Much the same the world over

□ THOSE seeking confirmation that abroad really is awful should look to a study on risk in emerging markets published next week by specialist analyst Merchant International Group. Taking as its starting point the axiom that, if you think education is expensive, try ignorance, the study sets out the political and economic background in over 40 emerging nations, and what can go wrong in each.

All the old favourites are here: guerrillas in Latin America, Islamic fundamentalism in Africa and Turkey, political uncertainties that mar the strong economies of Burma, China and Indonesia, organised crime in the former Soviet Union and the new democracies in Eastern Europe and violence in South Africa. And everywhere, pervasive corruption

and patronage, and expensive bureaucratic delay.

Stuart Poole-Robb, Merchant's chief executive, says information available to those venturing into emerging markets tends to be subjective. Bank research may be based on the countries' own economic data, and therefore suspect. This is putting it politely. In some markets everyone lies, from the finance ministry down.

But without succumbing too much to political correctness, one wonders how the developed world measures up. Outsiders trying to break into backwoods America can find the cards stacked against them in favour of local businesses. And anyone negotiating the corridors of Brussels might view the Russia mafia quite favourably. Once bought, at least they stay bought.

Holiday snap

□ GHOSTS of privatisation are even coming back to haunt NCF. Once a goodie among the fat cats. After buses and electricity, the pensions ombudsman is to report on accusations that NCF's fund surplus was used improperly for pay-offs and holidays. If true, it would be another case of riding roughshod over trustees because Whitehall or the board knows best. Ombudsmen were not meant to notice that.

BA makes peace with Caledonian at a cost of £6m

BY MARTIN BARROW

BRITISH AIRWAYS has agreed to settle a dispute with Caledonian Airways over aircraft maintenance at a cost of £6 million.

BA has agreed to pay Caledonian Airways £1.6 million in cash and to subscribe for a new class of convertible preference shares of Inspirations, Caledonian's parent company, at a cost of £4.4 million. The company has also agreed to enhance its engineering support for Caledonian's fleet, which was acquired from British Airways

in 1995, at Gatwick and other UK airports, dedicating engineering resources specifically to Caledonian's Tristar aircraft.

The claim centred on several occasions this summer when aircraft were returned to Caledonian behind schedule after engineering work by British Airways at Gatwick disrupted the operator's charter programme.

British Airways Engineering has acknowledged that "there were occasions when engineering work had taken

longer than anticipated, but safety is paramount and neither Caledonian Airways or British Airways would ever allow safety to be compromised". British Airways said that it regarded Caledonian Airways as "a valued customer".

Inspirations claims the total cost of the aviation and maintenance disruption was about £17 million for the year to September 30. British Airways is believed to have initially offered £1 million in settlement.

The disruption took place principally in August and September. Four operating losses in September were compounded by the adverse publicity concerning flight delays and increased capacity retained by the company after the collapse of The Flight Company.

Inspirations, whose chief executive is Vic Fatah, yesterday reported pre-tax losses of £13.19 million for the year to September 30, compared with profits of £7.7 million in the previous 12 months. Turnover rose to £403.2 million from £356.1 million.

The basic loss per share was 27.66p a share, against earnings of 18.36p. There is no final dividend, leaving a total of 0.78p a share, up from 3.5p. The shares rose 1p to 75p, against a 1996 high of 152p.

Jim Harris, the Inspirations chairman, said there had been a 47 per cent increase in winter bookings, while the summer 1997 programme is 10 per cent ahead of last year. The number of holidays available next summer has been reduced.



Vic Fatah saw Inspirations suffer heavy pre-tax losses

Eurovein sells core business for £14.8m

BY FRASER NELSON

EUROVEIN, the troubled specialist engineering company, has sold its core shock blast machinery arm to US Filter Inc for £14.8 million, some £2.5 million above the stock market value of the entire group.

The disposal will reduce Eurovein to a third of its current size, but will provide an £11.5 million war chest which the company intends to use for acquisitions to bolster its remaining components division. The new company will have assets of £16 million and will be renamed Tyzack Precision — a reversion to the firm's original name.

Its shares jumped from 55p to 76p yesterday — the highest since their post-floatation tumble from 140p to 34p two years ago. This values the company at £12.3 million.

Bill Eastwood, Eurovein's chief executive, said the disposal was prompted by the general wave of consolidation in the engineering sector. He added that while his shock blast machinery division generated two thirds of sales, it had an erratic profit record. In the six months to July 31, the division made a pre-tax profit of only £200,000 on sales of £26.7 million.

US Filter has agreed to accept £2.8 million of debt on behalf of the division, of which £650,000 will be repaid to Eurovein within two years.

Villiers, the engineering group which now owns 15 per cent of Eurovein, played down speculation that it may now make a formal bid for the company. Last month, it became Eurovein's largest shareholder after buying a further 500,000 shares worth £220,000.

Mr Eastwood said the company was not for sale.

Regent Pacific threatens legal action over expert

BY JASON NISSE

REGENT PACIFIC, the Hong Kong-based fund manager staking Hambros, is threatening legal action against rival GT Management in a dispute about the hiring of a leading emerging markets investment expert.

Alan Conway, the head of overseas investment at Hambros, the pensions group, had agreed to join Regent to run its emerging markets business out of London on an annual salary believed to be in excess of £200,000.

However, just days before he was due to join, and with the announcement already made to the industry, Mr Conway said he would instead take up a similar post at GT, which is owned by Bank in Liechtenstein. Regent, run by Jim Mellon, is led by Julian Mayo, head of the London office, said that its lawyers had

written to Mr Conway and GT saying that Regent was considering legal action for breach of contract and inducement to breach of contract.

Mr Mayo said: "I think it is rather odd for someone to sign a contract and say he is joining us and then turn round a few days later and do something completely different."

Regent, which has \$1.8 billion under management mostly in Hong Kong, is known for its aggressive action in trying to unlock the value of companies. Earlier this year it bought a 3 per cent stake in Hambros, the merchant bank, and set about putting pressure on the management team, led by Sir Chips Keswick.

Regent believes that Hambros would perform better if it sold its majority holding in Hambros Countrywide, the estate agency chain.

Move by Abell halts decline at Jourdan

BY FRASER NELSON

SHARES of Thomas Jourdan, the trouser press to DIY goods company, reversed their sharp decline yesterday on news that David Abell, the former chairman of Suter, had raised his interest in the company to 4.5 per cent.

Keith Whitten, chairman of Jourdan said yesterday that Mr Abell now owned 2.8 per cent of the shares directly, while his family and business associates have amassed a further 1.7 per cent share. The company has asked to Mr Abell to explain his motives behind the shareholding.

Jourdan's shares, which had fallen from 35p since March, rose from a low of 22p to close at 26p yesterday.

Mr Abell pocketed an estimated £10 million after Suter was sold to Ascot Holdings for £290 million. He is currently suing Ascot for £2 million in pay and bonuses that he claims should have been added to the basic £1.1 million payoff he did receive.

Thomas Jourdan's market value stood at £4.77 million at the close of trading yesterday.

Tempus, page 24

Profits warning lops 180p off Brake Brothers

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHARES of Brake Brothers, a leading supplier of food to the catering industry, lost nearly one-quarter of their value yesterday after the company gave warning that profits would fall short of City expectations.

The shares fell 180p to 576p yesterday after Brake Brothers said that profits are set to decline due to problems at Puritan Maid, the food distribution business acquired from Forte for £7.5 million last year.

Pre-tax profit in the year that ends on December 31 is likely to be about £24 million, the company said. This is below market expectations and substantially below the £27.1 million achieved last year.

The profit decline will interrupt a record of consistent profits growth since the company was floated ten years ago. Puritan Maid is a multi-temperature distributor and its purchase was a shift away from Brake Brothers' traditional specialisation in frozen food distribution.

Tempus, page 24

Private investors lodge £100m more in unit trusts

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

PRIVATE investors pumped £409 million into unit trusts in November, an increase of more than £100 million on October, according to the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (AUTF).

For the second time in four months, net retail sales of UK growth unit trusts, which invest 80 per cent in UK companies, beat those of UK gilt and fixed interest funds, suggesting investors may be turning

to equities. Sales of UK growth funds were £6.4 million up at £108.4 million. Before July, UK gilt and fixed interest unit trusts had been the best sellers for 12 months.

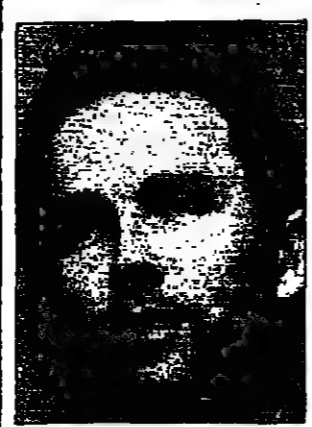
Direct advertising and company sales forces provided the bulk of the retail interest in UK growth funds, provoking concerns of potential mis-selling as the UK stock market reaches its zenith.

In contrast, the City favoured overseas diversification, putting more than £128 million into international growth funds, three times the amount it put into UK growth. Overall, institutional investors bought £531 million of unit trusts.

Pep sales recovered to £309 million, after slowing in October in the aftermath of the Morgan Grenfell affair. AUTF said annual Pep sales were fast approaching £6 billion.

Mr Johnson's team is said to be ploughing "several hundreds of thousands of pounds" into the paper.

The new line-up at *Sunday Business* includes chief executive David Devoto, who worked previously for Thomson Regional Newspapers among others, and Alan McIntosh — who has worked with Mr Johnson for three years — as finance director.



Johnson: takes control

LUKE JOHNSON, the City dealmaker who has been involved in businesses as diverse as Pizza Express and Wakehouse, has taken control of *Sunday Business*, the newspaper bought out of administration by a group of investors for £30,000 two months ago (Jason Nisse writes).

The former Kleinwort Benson media analyst takes over from Gordon Brown, the Yorkshire businessman who ploughed £128 million into the paper before buying it from the administrators. Mr

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Wall Street extends the festive cheer in London

SHARES on the London stock market extended their record breaking performance during the run-up to Christmas, supported by a strong bond market and a positive start to trading on Wall Street.

The FT-SE 100 index ended at its best of the day with a rise of 9.6 points to a new closing high of 4,087.2 after recovering from an early 11-point setback.

A touch of festive cheer, mixed with early speculation about possible candidates for the New Year share tips, strengthened sentiment. But, a strong window dressing by institutions and traders combined with stock shortages to provide the real impetus.

There was little evidence of genuine retail support, with just 351 million shares changing hands by the close. Turnover is expected to show a further decline during today's shortened trading session.

Shares of bid target Northern Electric were suspended at 64p as the Takeover Panel moved to investigate the circumstances leading to BZW, the group's financial adviser, acquiring a parcel of shares before Friday's deadline for the offer.

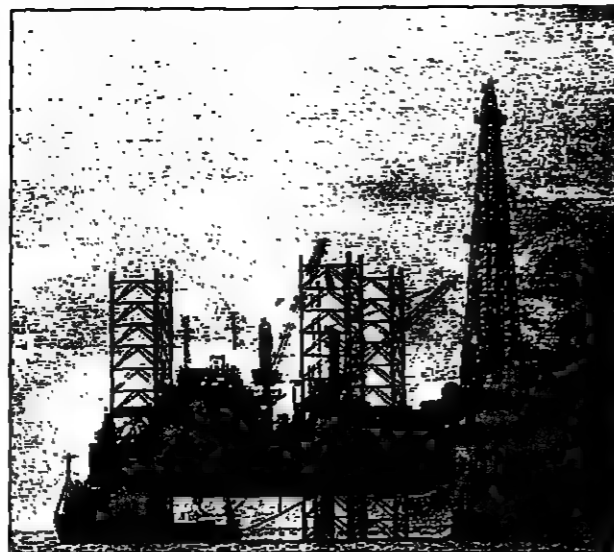
Over the weekend, the Takeover Panel extended the deadline until 1pm today after charges that BZW had accepted a fee of £250,000 for buying shares in Northern Electric, its client. CE Electric's offer valued Northern at 650p a share, or £660 million.

Meanwhile, the takeover spotlight focused firmly on Yorkshire Electricity as the price surged 26p to 798p on turnover of 888,088 shares. Dealers point out it is one of the few remaining utilities that is still independent.

Mercury Asset Management made an inauspicious debut as a constituent of the top 100 shares, with profit-taking leaving the price 15p easier at £12.36.

British Gas shrugged off some of its recent weakness to finish 5 1/2p better at 277p after confirming it is in talks with Mobil about its take-or-pay North Sea gas contracts. The two sides are renegotiating two contracts. It is expected British Gas will buy Mobil the equivalent of £285 million for lower volumes and prices in the form of assets involving the Beryl field.

Stock shortages provided a number of blue chips with



Speculators expect more oil bids and prices firmed

double-figure gains. Allied Domecq rose 14 1/2p to 439 1/2p as fewer than 4 million shares were traded, while gains were also seen in Tomkins, 11p to 267 1/2p and Zeneca, 23p to £16.49.

Confirmation that it was in talks with Littlewoods about the sale of its Freeman's mail order business enabled the shares of Sears to firm 1 1/2p to the offer.

Signs of revival at Roxboro Group, where the share price has plummeted this year from 314p after two profit warnings. It rallied 14p to 192 1/2p yesterday, which will be good news for the acquisitive TT Group which bought 4.75 million shares, or 8.46 per cent, last month at an average price of 139p a share.

89 1/2p against the backdrop of an otherwise depressed retail sector. Elsewhere, the rest of the retailers were held back by suggestions that the build-up to Christmas had not been as lucrative as first thought.

Warnings from suppliers SR Geat, unchanged at 59 1/2p, and Claremont, unchanged at 167p, served to underpin these fears.

Losses were seen in Great

Universal Stores, down 5 1/2p to 617 1/2p; Argos, 4p to 773 1/2p; Alders, 1 1/2p to 136 1/2p; Dixons, 4p to 523 1/2p; John Lewis, 6 1/2p to 547 1/2p; and Oasis Stores, 2 1/2p to 345p. But it seems Kleinwort Benson, the broker, is a buyer of Marks & Spencer, up 6 1/2p to 479p, and Next, 5 1/2p dealer at 530p.

In issuing yesterday's profits warning, Brake Brothers

succeeded in wiping out all the hard effort of the previous year, with the shares tumbling 180 1/2p to a new low of 576p, having started the year at 650p. The group blames its problems on losses at Puritan Maid, the temperature controlled distribution business it acquired in November last year.

Pre-tax profits for the current year will fall short of last

year's £27.1 million with the group forecasting around £24 million. That compares with the £29 million being forecast by most brokers.

News of a bid approach from Halliburton sent shares of OGC International, the oil services group, climbing 4 1/2p to 116p. At these levels OGC is capitalised at £70.5 million.

Only last week in the oil sector, Gulf Canada Resources launched a £32 million bid for Clyde Petroleum, a 2p easier at 117p. The approach was immediately rejected by Clyde which intends to resist all moves by Gulf Canada.

City speculators now feel it is just a matter of time before other bidders emerge in the oil sector. Gains were recorded in British Petroleum, 16 1/2p to 759p, Cairn Energy, 5 1/2p to 416 1/2p, and Pecten, 4p to 463p.

Shares of NSM were suspended at 8p while the group complete the disposal of several businesses including Clee Hill Plant. Only last week the group announced it was in talks with its bankers to over immediate and long-term working capital requirements. GILF EDGED: After trading sideways for much of the day, prices received a late boost from a firm start to trading by US Treasury bonds. Gilt prices rose by up to 10p to the longer end, producing a further flattening of the yield curve.

In the futures pit, the March series of the Long Gilt put in a late spurt to finish 1 1/2p better at £109 3/4, as the total number of contracts completed slumped to 14,000, one of the lowest levels of the year.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 put on £1 to finish at £103 1/4, while further worries about the next rise in interest rate restricted the gains among shorter dated issues. Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was 1 1/2p firmer at £102 1/4.

NEW YORK: US shares were higher at midday in thin volume of 160 million shares traded. Technology issues fell on concern over consumer spending. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 18.07 points at 6,502.47.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday): Dow Jones 6,502.47 (+18.07) S&P Composite 748.54 (+0.33)

Tokyo: Nikkei Average Closed

Hong Kong: Hang Seng 13,331.48 (+200.07)

Amsterdam: EOE Index 6,055.03 (+2.32)

Sydney: ASX 2,880.5 (+0.7)

Frankfurt: DAX 2,865.57 (+4.88)

Singapore: Straits 2,195.86 (+0.98)

Brussels: CMCX 1,046.81 (+13.78)

Paris: CAC 40 2,887.41 (+8.94)

Zurich: SMI 3,311.50 (+2.30)

London: FT 30 2,997.1 (+6.7) FT 100 4,087.2 (+9.6) FTSE 100 4,087.2 (+9.6) FTSE 250 2,028.1 (+4.4) FTSE Europe 100 1,885.66 (+2.57) FT All-Share 1,980.64 (+4.30) FT Non Financials 2,077.67 (+3.14) FT All-Share 1,980.64 (+4.30) FT Non Financials 2,077.67 (+3.14)

Bank of England official call (pence) 1,396

REPL 15.9 Nov (2.7%) Jan 1997-100

RPIX 15.7 Nov (3.3%) Jan 1987-100

RECENT ISSUES

Advanced Power 80 - 2

Aquarius 172 - 1

Archer Dedicated 100 ...

BZW Automotive Ltd 53 ...

Centric 240 ...

Colt Telecom (275) 291 + 4

Crown Leisure 814 ...

Dawn Tili Dusk 1214 ...

Finbury Ind Hedge 615 ...

Fountain Forestry 854 ...

Henderson Tech 3 ...

Highways Systems 300 ...

Kern River 1874 ...

Kier Group 1044 ...

Netcall 499 ...

Oliver Ashworth 1354 ...

Opt-Line 1024 ...

Oxford Biomedica 704 ...

Parkwood Holdings 174 ...

Pilat Tech 554 ...

Provent 1253 ...

SDX Business Sys 1724 + 2

Scott Highland Hts 128 ...

Simplex Healthcare 2424 ...

Sutton Harbour 145 ...

Xenova 2034 - 13

Yeoman Group 1594 ...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Allied Colloids n/p 8 - 4

Aurum Assoc n/p (5) 14 ...

Azian n/p (630) ...

Biochemics n/p 250 - 14

MAJOR CHANGES

ISSUES:

Apex Com 120p (+21p)

BICC 272p (+18p)

BICC 272p (+18p)

Tomkins 287p (+11p)

Devenport Holdings 462p (+18p)

REA 300p (+10p)

TT Group 322p (+10p)

British Petroleum 759p (+18p)

Oil & Natural Gas 781p (+14p)

Alparag 280p (+10p)

Reylon 337p (+12p)

FALLS:

Danica Sys 555p (-18p)

Powercor 582p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 27

TEMPUS

Strong man needed at Sears

SEARS' confirmation yesterday that it is close to selling Freeman's to Littlewoods did nothing to help its share price, which has declined nearly 20 per cent this year. The disposal is likely to be of equally little benefit to the battered reputation of Liam Strong, chief executive of Sears.

Critics have been laying into Mr Strong since September, when he reported that Sears' interim profits were down from £30 million to just £25 million. The fall came after a £25 million provision was taken against exposure to the shoe shops sold to Stephen Hinchliffe's collapsed Sals group.

The probable sale of Freeman's fails to impress not because it looks like a particularly bad deal for Sears or for investors, who are likely to get a special dividend out of it, but because it will have little or no impact on the

group's main problem, which is its shoe business.

Sears' British Shoe Corporation remains the country's biggest shoe retailer. But, despite revamps and the launch of Shoe Express and Shoe City, its poor sales continue to worry investors. The new formats are certainly not the success that Sears was looking for and that Mr Strong needed to ensure his future with the group, four years after joining from British Airways.

Mr Strong has from now until April, when he will report the company's full-year results, to convince investors that he has a clear strategy from the group and that he is the man to sort of the shoe business once and for all. To do that, he will have to achieve a lot more in the next four months than he has in the last four years.

Spirits sector

THE spirits companies will be happy to see the back of 1996. The alcoholic beverages share price index has languished below the FT-SE all year - falling about 12 per cent since January.

This performance is particularly lacklustre in the context of the recovery in consumer spending on both sides of the Atlantic.

While the brewing industry has recognised that consumer attitudes have changed and innovated, introducing new products like aleoapps and nitro-keg beers, the spirits industry seems stuck in a time warp.

The spirits companies need to update their image if they are to attract the younger consumers vital for their long term future. Of the three leading spirits companies, Grand Metropolitan app-

ears to have most headed the

lessen of the aleoapp craze, introducing a swathe of experimental products including the highly successful Smirnoff Mole. GrandMet's strength in vodka, one of the few growing segments of the spirit markets, is a distinct advantage over its two rivals.

Guinness is too reliant on the less fashionable brown spirits, while Allied Domecq's portfolio still looks too weak, despite its strong presence in tequila. The spirits industry could benefit from a round of consolidation and brand rationalisation. But with all the big companies committed to preserving their existing diversified states the sector is set for another year of stalemate.

Brake Brothers

BY THE company's own admission, Brake Brothers' problems are because of poor management of expansion. After buying the Puritan Maid multi-temperature distribution business from Forte at the end of last year, Brake Brothers was keen to use some spare distribution capacity to build up a client base so that it did not just rely on Forte.

After adding companies like Bass, however, it found that Puritan Maid's capacity was exhausted very quickly. That meant hiring extra staff and facilities, pushing costs sky-high. The result, not surprisingly, is that Puritan Maid will make a loss of around £4.5 million this year.

Diversifying from frozen into multi-temperature distribution was a sound move because it broke an increasing number of clients wary. And although at considerable cost the company has managed to keep its new Puritan

Maid clients happy. The company is now building the facilities to handle the expanded business and it has appointed new managers at the subsidiary. However, it does not expect profits from Puritan Maid for more than one year. Its shares should be treated with caution until those profits are clearly on their way.

Thomas Jourdan

BY NETTING around £10 million from the sale of Suter, David Abell proved his ability to pick winners. While his decision to buy into Thomas Jourdan may well prove a prelude to greater plans, it also serves as a signal that the company's shares have fallen too far.

On a trading basis, Jourdan (itself bottomed out two years ago) broke into profit last year, and markets have picked up since. The market for its well-known Corby

trouser press has strengthened as orders come flooding back from hotels and the presses are shipped out to Japan.

Prospects at its fire surroundings division are increasing with the recovery in the housing market, and the launch of new fire products should stoke the division's progress next year.

Its giftware division, which supplies Marks & Spencer, has recently linked up with Boots. Profits from this venture are due in the next set of results.

Any company which can turn profits out of a Floating Hippo Soap Dish deserves a fair hearing. But Jourdan's shares have tumbled just as its markets have picked up. On a ratio of 15.4 times, its shares seem good value if the recovery continues. Indeed, with a market value of £7.7 million, Thomas Jourdan itself may rank as a nifty little filer for ambitious businessmen with £10 million to spend.

LOW SPIRITS

FT-SE 100 (relative)

FT-SE alcoholic beverages index

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

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THE TIMES



CITY DIARY

Recipe for trouble

TUCKED away in Anthony Worrall-Thompson's stack of Christmas mail is a letter that could turn the celebrity chef's turkey green. The board of Baldwin, the leisure group that bought Simpsons of Cornwall in December 1992, has written to the headstrong managing director of Simpsons, asking him to account for some of his more curious spending sprees. According to Sandy Singh, chief executive, it is about "certain ordering without authorisation".

Free launch?

DESPITE losing £30,000 in unpaid fees for work on the launch in April, MacLaurin Communications, the PR company, has agreed to take on the relaunch of the ailing Sunday Business. Brian MacLaurin, the PR firm's boss, is clearly taking a more sanguine view. Only a few weeks ago, he was telling anyone who would listen that he wanted to call in his heaves to help to recover the money.

STILL on the subject of PR, does anyone know who is acting for Bruncliffe Aggregates, the troubled group under threat from rivals Bardon after using Ian James, the larger-than-life publicist, it moved to College Hill, which was fired last week in favour of Citigate, but no one told College Hill until yesterday.

Good vintage

OVER from Vienna, William de Gelsey celebrated his 75th birthday last week in Brook's Club. Sir Andrew Large, SIB chairman, Lord Swaythling, chairman of Rothmans International, and Sir John Craven, chairman of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, were among his distinguished guests. They drank to toast to the senior adviser to Creditanstalt with a glass of Royal Tokay Aszú, "the wine of kings and king of wines", according to Hungarian-born de Gelsey.



A CURIOUS invitation from the Cambridge Political Economy Society and Oxford University Press. The age-old institutions have joined forces to produce the Cambridge Journal of Economics, in spite of years of rivalry between the two universities. A CJE spokesman said: "The decision was not made on sentimental grounds."

Winning number

CELLNET, the mobile phone company, is issuing a challenge to find the UK's busiest business card — the one bearing the most contact numbers. Richard Vaughan-Davies, a gentleman's outfitter in North Wales, currently leads with a staggering nine contact numbers. The national winner will receive £1,000 and free use of Cellnet's personal assistant service, which offers one point of contact for people with plenty of numbers.

SPARE a thought for John Burke, chief executive of Bristol & West Building Society, and pray that it doesn't snow. This is his family's first Christmas in their newly converted farmhouse on the outskirts of Bristol — and the Aga isn't working.

MORAG PRESTON

Umbro puts its shirt on the loyalty of football followers

Jason Njssé and Chris Ayres on rising competition among makers of replica soccer kit

More than a million children and adults will receive presents of team football shirts tomorrow. This year will go down as the best ever for an industry that has grown beyond all recognition in the 1990s and is now reckoned to have an annual turnover of more than £500 million. At the centre of it all is a small Cheshire-based company whose name brings out affection and loathing in equal measure, Umbro.

Umbro makes the most successful replica team strip in the world — Manchester United. In spite of a recent deal in which Nike lured the Brazil team from Umbro for \$200 million, with a guarantee of another \$200 million to be spent on promotions, United leads the industry, outselling the likes of Barcelona, Juventus and Bayern Munich. Every new United shirt sells in its hundreds of thousands and the latest home and away shirts, introduced controversially at the start of this season, are outselling their nearest rivals in the high street, Liverpool (made by Reebok) and Arsenal (Nike), by nearly two to one.

Steve Preston, chief executive of Umbro Europe, says that the firm has yet to have a million-selling shirt, but the current United strip could be the first. That is why United makes more than £30 million a year from merchandising and Umbro recently renewed its deal with the club, paying a reputed £80 million over five years.

Yet just four years ago, Umbro was near collapse. The Humphreys family, who founded it in 1924 (Umbro is short for Humphreys Brothers) had been making team strips since the 1930s, when they signed a deal with Manchester City. It made all bar one of the kits for the 1966 World Cup, but branded products did not break through until the 1970s, with Admiral's deal with England being one of the first. Umbro, run from Wythenshaw, south of Manchester, had sold the US distribution rights to an underwear maker in South Carolina, called Stone Manufacturing. In 1992, Stone said that it would buy the whole of Umbro for £2.9 million, and the Humphreys could not sign fast enough.

Around the same time, it was decided to concentrate on football. Preston says: "The decision was taken because the increased cost of sponsorship meant a small company like us could not be in multi-sports. We decided there was enough of a market in football for us to go for, and no one knew more about our sport than us."

The strategy worked. In 1993, Umbro had turnover of just £61.9 million and made losses of £494,000, but, by 1995, sales had grown to £109 million and the business made a taxable profit of £14.4 million. Industry experts reckon that sales could reach £150 million this year, though stiff competition from the likes of Nike,



Steve Preston, top, with Alan Shearer, England's captain, above left, and Ryan Giggs of Manchester United

Adidas and Reebok mean that profits will be about the same.

There is heavy speculation that Umbro may float in 1997, and could have a market value of more than £250 million. Preston does not play down this speculation, but defers to the US headquarters. There, Jim Foster, the director of corporate strategy, said: "There are many ways of bringing capital into a growing business and an IPO [American for flotation] is among many things we are looking at."

Yet, with this success, come accusations of exploitation. A recent survey of football fans found that a third thought that their clubs were trying to rip them off. Sheila Spier, of the Football Supporters Association, says: "Clubs are changing their strips simply to milk the markets. They sell more strips when they change the design. Most of the kits are sold in extra-large size, which means adults are buying them as fashion items. It would be a good idea if clubs sold the smaller-sized kits cheaper for the kids."

Chris Evans, the Radio 1 disc jockey, started a campaign against United and Umbro when the previous away strip was ditched because the players said that they found that its grey colour made team-mates blend into the crowd. This led Umbro to bring out the new white strip at a reduced price.

The Football Association's head of

marketing, Phil Carling, was subjected to a roasting on a live radio show presented by David Mellor, the former Cabinet Minister, after it was announced that the England team was bringing out a new strip after Christmas, replacing the shirts worn for the Euro 96 championships. And who makes the England strip (as well as Scotland, Ireland, Everton, Chelsea, Nottingham Forest, Manchester City, Celtic, Aberdeen, Inter Milan and Lazio, to name but a few)? Umbro.

Preston throws up his hands at the mention of England. "We were under enormous pressure to change the Euro 96 away strip to red," he says. The old strip was officially described as indigo, but, in truth, was grey. England's final appearance in it was the semi-final defeat by Germany. The FA has vowed that the new kit will last until 1999, taking it past the World Cup in France. "We're now making sure that all the shirts have a definite time limit on them so people can see we're being open about it," said an FA official. "But for the pricing and the wear you get out of a shirt, we think two years is quite a long time."

Umbro works on the basis of signing a club for five years. It believes in changing at least one of the strips each year — most clubs have two official

strips, but some, like United, have had three. Umbro will pay a big fee to clubs in the form of a guaranteed payment and a royalty on top.

Deals in Europe are also coming thick and fast, although the market lags the UK. "This is a more mature market, with a bigger customer base for kit," says Preston. "We are leading the world."

However, the price is soaring. Umbro's success has brought stiff competition from other manufacturers. The emergence of Nike, which signed the striker Ian Wright and then the whole of the Arsenal team, has made replica shirts an expensive business.

"Nike aims to become as dominant in this sport as they are in other sports," says Preston. "They are buying a dominant place in the industry."

Prices are now so high that Preston admits that it is almost impossible to make money on new replica shirt contracts. However, the manufacturers take the view that they are promoting their own brand, which is why you see television adverts apparently pushing Newcastle United, but actually paid for by their kit makers, Adidas.

However, Preston is fairly sanguine about the toughness of the marketplace. "Competition is healthy," he says. "It helps Umbro that we are not the sole providers of the gospel according to football."



ANATOLE KALETSKY

The way of all monopolies

Whew! The Christmas shopping is over. You have slumped into favourite armchair. You are heaving a sigh of relief when suddenly you remember: the true ordeal begins on Boxing Day. Buying computerised gizmos for your children (or perhaps even yourself) is the easy part. The hard part — the impossible, maddening, blood-boiling, brain-roasting, apocalyptic assault on your serenity and self-respect — is making the damn things work.

Why does nothing involving personal computers ever seem to work first time? Why is it that when you load your child's new CD-Rom on Boxing Day your computer will respond with the familiar helpful suggestions: "Error Reading Drive D" or "Insufficient Memory" or "General Failure Error" — Abort, Retry, Ignore?

Computers today are at the stage of industrial development that cars reached in the 1900s: every driver had to be his own mechanic and it was taken for granted that even a Rolls-Royce would break down on a long trip. Yet the computer business shows no sign of even trying to give consumers what they have come to expect from every other industry: an appliance that is cheap, easy to use and, above all, trouble-free.

Don't worry. I am not about to compose an elegy for the quill pen. I quite like computers and have three of them in my home. It is precisely because I use computers so much that they make me so angry. What makes me especially angry is the way that two companies — Microsoft and Intel — have exploited the ignorance of consumers to keep these machines expensive and needlessly complex.

The main objective for both Intel and Microsoft is not to make computers cheaper and more reliable. It is to stop the operating heart of the PC becoming a "commodity product", which would allow other companies to compete and bring the price down. By marketing new generations of microprocessors and operating systems, these companies have managed to keep the price of computers from falling below \$2,000 to

\$3,000, despite the phenomenal reductions made in production costs. Of course, today's computers can perform tasks inconceivable on those sold a few years ago. But do consumers want or even understand these capabilities?

If you want a computer for writing, analysing spreadsheets or using the Internet, the bells and whistles provided by each new generation of machine are not just redundant. They are often counterproductive, making these machines more complicated, less reliable and slower to use, despite their allegedly faster processing speeds.

Two years ago, I put this complaint to a man who could do something about it — Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft. Mr Gates, responded with his familiar smirk: "You're probably the sort of guy who still uses an old 286 machine you bought ten years ago."

In this, as in many other things, Mr Gates was absolutely right. (You can't be wrong about everything and become the richest man in the world.) But his old-fashioned response did not address the fundamental flaw in his company's strategy.

Emerson said that "if a man make a better mousetrap, the whole world will beat a path to his door". By proving Emerson wrong, Mr Gates has become richer than the Rockefeller, who monopolised the great growth industry of their era. But when your children call you to fix the crash caused by Microsoft's Encarta running on Microsoft's Windows while Microsoft's Excel was working in the background, reflect on this: Microsoft's shares have trebled in the past two years. IBM's shares trebled in the two years from 1981 to 1983, when it invented the personal computer.

One day somebody will do to Microsoft and Intel what these companies did to IBM. They will make a functional computer that costs less than Mr Gates charges for his Windows operating system alone. Microsoft and Intel will go the way of other monopolists. And my brain will stop suffering from Boxing Day short-circuits when I see "General Failure Error" — Abort, Retry, Ignore.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Act places burden on small business

From Mrs Barbara Roche, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green (Labour)

Sir, Ann Widdecombe claims that employers will not be expected to act as immigration officers under her Asylum Act ("Firms face big fine for each illegal worker", December 4). She goes on to say that employers will not have to make checks on potential employees' documents, but admits that if checks are not made there will be no statutory defence to the criminal charge.

What kind of fairy tale world is this minister living in?

Britain's small firms have enough to contend with, without the extra burdens imposed by this Act. Michael Heseltine admitted to me in a Parliamentary Answer recently that this Bill will cost them over £12 million in the first year alone. The Federation of Small Businesses stated in July that they "do not believe that it is the job of the employer to make checks on immigration status and maintain that such a proposal will prove unworkable irrespective of the so-called light regulatory touch promised by ministers".

Labour agrees. We opposed these measures when they came before the House and Jack Straw has made it clear that we will not operate them in government. Britain's small firms deserve a fair deal, it is the next Labour government who will be lifting burdens from them.

Yours faithfully,
BARBARA ROCHE
(Shadow Small Business Minister),
House of Commons, SW1

Fraudulent insurance claims cost honest policyholders

From Mr Piero Chiodo

Sir, Your article "Insurers join in weather study" (November 29) highlights that around 3,000 people a year attempt to obtain detailed weather information in order to make fraudulent damage claims.

Last year, fraudulent insurance claims totalled some £380 million and it is thought that honest policyholders are paying as much as 4 per cent extra for their policies because of this problem.

Sadly, many customers perceive insurance fraud as being fair. Research conducted by the Centre for the Study of Public Order based at the

University of Leicester found that 25 per cent of 600 householders questioned thought that there was nothing wrong in increasing the amount of an insurance claim to cover the cost of the excess. A further 15 per cent thought it was acceptable to exaggerate a claim to cover both the excess and additional money.

In order for insurance companies to handle claims effectively, investments in prevention of claims, better customer services (fast and fair settlement), customer profiling, risk management, claims shared information and fraud detection are critical. Information technology

and network computing are essential in tackling these tasks.

The future of the industry is dependent on delivering cost-effective products and services to its customers. Only when the industry succeeds in dealing with fraud effectively will policyholders see the benefit of reduced premiums and insurers improved profits.

Yours faithfully,
PIERO CHIODO,
Manager, Claims Solutions,
IBM Insurance UK,
New Square,
Bedford Lakes,
Feltham,
Middlesex

Conveyancing profit projection proves intriguing to legal profession

From Mr G. K. C. Chapman

Sir, I was interested to read the two articles in the Business Section of December 4 relating to Hambro Countrywide offering conveyancing services. Apart from the statement that all delays are as a result of solicitors moving at "snail's pace" to which I, and I am sure the remainder of the profession, will take justifiable exception, I was intrigued to note the projected profits of £10,000,000

over a three-year period. I believe that most solicitors would be reasonably satisfied with a profit of 25 per cent.

Thus, to achieve a profit of £10,000,000 would require a turnover of £40,000,000 which does not allow for any set-up costs. At an average cost per conveyance of between £250 and £300, this will require approximately 145,000 conveyances in the three-year period or almost 50,000 trans-

actions per annum. This would require each fee earner to carry out approximately 485 completed conveyancing transactions per annum to achieve the required fee income of £133,000 per fee earner. I believe it to be generally accepted that to conclude a conveyancing transaction from start to finish will take a minimum of six hours. This would require the fee earner to work almost 3,000 hours per annum.

Within the profession, it is generally accepted that anything over 1,200 chargeable hours is reasonable. Would Mr Hill be kind enough to let me know where I can recruit staff who would be prepared to put in such hours? It seems likely that, with these hours, it would not be long before any such staff were unable to work at all, let alone with the relative alacrity of the snail's pace.

Yours faithfully,
G. K. C. CHAPMAN,
60 Commercial Road,
Paddock Wood,
Tonbridge, Kent

Meter reading for the gasman

From Om P. Midha

Sir, My lifelong observance of the maxim "neither a borrower nor a lender be" is being undermined by British Gas, leading to the conclusion that privatisation can be a contributory factor to the occurrence of insanity.

My meter was last read on 18.11.95, and after repeated reminders by me a bill was sent on 08.03.96. Again, after providing my own reading by a number of telephone calls, a bill was provided on 04.07.96. As before, it took numerous requests compiled with up-to-date reading to acquire a bill on 16.11.96.

It will be nice to welcome a meter-reader.

Yours faithfully,
OM P. MIDHA,
1 Woodbine Avenue,
Gosforth,
Newcastle upon Tyne.

Pessimistic media

From Mr Richard Dale

Sir, Why is it that all economic news is portrayed as negative? For instance, when interest rates go up the headline is "borrowers hit by higher rates", when interest rates go down the headline is "savers hit by lower rates". Whatever happens, you invariably emphasise the downside, thus creating a distorted view in the minds of more impressionable readers. It is the media that encourages generally pessimistic views on news matters, usually blaming the Government for all so-called "bad" news.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD DALE,
Spring Cottage,
64 Friday Street,
Warrnam, West Sussex

BELL ATLANTIC FOREIGN SALES CORPORATION

Specialists in aircraft financing

Bell Atlantic Foreign Sales Corporation structures and invests in single investor and leveraged leases for a variety of large ticket items:

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- COMPUTERS
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- CONSTRUCTION AND CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

In addition, Bell Atlantic Foreign Sales Corporation, provides general equipment leasing services in the small ticket and middle market areas for vendors and users of copiers, telecommunications and data processing systems, and a wide range of other income producing equipment.

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BELL ATLANTIC FOREIGN SALES CORPORATION

Suite 208, Citibank Building
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U.S. Virgin Islands 00801

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Modest gains in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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1978-79	1977-78	1976-77	1975-76	1974-75	1973-74	1972-73	1971-72	1970-71	1969-70	1968-69	1967-68	1966-67	1965-66	1964-65	1963-64	1962-63	1961-62	1960-61	1959-60	1958-59	1957-58	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1952-53	1951-52	1950-51	1949-50	1948-49	1947-48	1946-47	1945-46	1944-45	1943-44	1942-43	1941-42	1940-41	1939-40	1938-39	1937-38	1936-37	1935-36	1934-35	1933-34	1932-33	1931-32	1930-31	1929-30	1928-29	1927-28	1926-27	1925-26	1924-25	1923-24	1922-23	1921-22	1920-21	1919-20	1918-19	1917-18	1916-17	1915-16	1914-15	1913-14	1912-13	1911-12	1910-11	1909-10	1908-09	1907-08	1906-07	1905-06	1904-05	1903-04	1902-03	1901-02	1900-01	1899-00	1898-99	1897-98	1896-97	1895-96	1894-95	1893-94	1892-93	1891-92	1890-91	1889-90	1888-89	1887-88	1886-87	1885-86	1884-85	1883-84	1882-83	1881-82	1880-81	1879-80	1878-79	1877-78	1876-77	1875-76	1874-75	1873-74	1872-73	1871-72	1870-71	1869-70	1868-69	1867-68	1866-67	1865-66	1864-65	1863-64	1862-63	1861-62	1860-61	1859-60	1858-59	1857-58	1856-57	1855-56	1854-55	1853-54	1852-53	1851-52	1850-51	1849-50	1848-49	1847-48	1846-47	1845-46	1844-45	1843-44	1842-43	1841-42	1840-41	1839-40	1838-39	1837-38	1836-37	1835-36	1834-35	1833-34	1832-33	1831-32	1830-31	1829-30	1828-29	1827-28	1826-27	1825-26	1824-25	1823-24	1822-23	1821-22	1820-21	1819-20	1818-19	1817-18	1816-17	1815-16	1814-15	1813-14	1812-13	1811-12	1810-11	1809-10	1808-09	1807-08	1806-07	1805-06	1804-05	1803-04	1802-03	1801-02	1800-01	1799-00	1798-99	1797-98	1796-97	1795-96	1794-95	1793-94	1792-93	1791-92	1790-91	1789-90	1788-89	1787-88	1786-87	1785-86	1784-85	1783-84	1782-83	1781-82	1780-81	1779-80	1778-79	1777-78	1776-77	1775-76	1774-75	1773-74	1772-73	1771-72	1770-71	1769-70	1768-69	1767-68	1766-67	1765-66	1764-65	1763-64	1762-63	1761-62	1760-61	1759-60	1758-59	1757-58	1756-57	1755-56	1754-55	1753-54	1752-53	1751-52	1750-51	1749-50	1748-49	1747-48	1746-47	1745-46	1744-45	1743-44	1742-43	1741-42	1740-41	1739-40	1738-39	1737-38	1736-37	1735-36	1734-35	1733-34	1732-33	1731-32	1730-31	1729-30	1728-29	1727-28	1726-27	1725-26	1724-25	1723-24	1722-23	1721-22	1720-21	1719-20	1718-19	1717-18	1716-17	1715-16	1714-15	1713-14	1712-13	1711-12	1710-11	1709-10	1708-09	1707-08	1706-07	1705-06	1704-05	1703-04	1702-03	1701-02	1700-01	1699-00	1698-99	1697-98	1696-97	1695-96	1694-95	1693-94	1692-93	1691-92	1690-91	1689-90	1688-89	1687-88	1686-87	1685-86	1684-85	1683-84	1682-83	1681-82	1680-81	1679-80	1678-79	1677-78	1676-77	1675-76	1674-75	1673-74	1672-73	1671-72	1670-71	1669-70	1668-69	1667-68	1666-67	1665-66	1664-65	1663-64	1662-63	1661-62	1660-61	1659-60	1658-59	1657-58	1656-57	1655-56	1654-55	1653-54	1652-53	1651-52	1650-51	1649-50	1648-49	1647-48	1646-47	1645-46	1644-45	1643-44	1642-43	1641-42	1640-41	1639-40	1638-39	1637-38	1636-37	1635-36	1634-35	1633-34	1632-33	1631-32	1630-31	1629-30	1628-29	1627-28	1626-27	1625-26	1624-25	1623-24	1622-23	1621-22	1620-21	1619-20	1618-19	1617-18	1616-17	1615-16	1614-15	1613-14	1612-13	1611-12	1610-11	1609-10	1608-09	1607-08	1606-07	1605-06	1604-05	1603-04	1602-03	1601-02	1600-01	1599-00	1598-99	1597-98	1596-97	1595-96	1594-95	1593-94	1592-93	1591-92	1590-91	1589-90	1588-89	1587-88	1586-87	1585-86	1584-85	1583-84	1582-83	1581-82	1580-81	1579-80	1578-79	1577-78	1576-77	1575-76	1574-75	1573-74	1572-73	1571-72	1570-71	1569-70	1568-69	1567-68	1566-67	1565-66	1564-65	1563-64	1562-63	1561-62	1560-61	1559-60	1558-59	1557-58	1556-57	1555-56	1554-55	1553-54	1552-53	1551-52	1550-51	1549-50	1548-49	1547-48	1546-47	1545-46	1544-45	1543-44	1542-43	1541-42	1540-41	1539-40	1538-39	1537-38	1536-37	1535-36	1534-35	1533-34	1532-33	1531-32	1530-31	1529-30	1528-29	1527-28	1526-27	1525-26	1524-25	1523-24	1522-23	1521-22	1520-21	1519-20	1518-19	1517-18	1516-17	1515-16	1514-15	1513-14	1512-13	1511-12	1510-11	1509-10	1508-09	1507-08	1506-07	1505-06	1504-05	1503-04	1502-03	1501-02	1500-01	1499-00	1498-99	1497-98	1496-97	1495-96	1494-95	1493-94	1492-93	1491-92	1490-91	1489-90	1488-89	1487-88	1486-87	1485-86	1484-85	1483-84	1482-83	1481-82	1480-81	1479-80	1478-79	1477-78	1476-77	1475-76	1474-75	1473-74	1472-73	1471-72	1470-71	1469-70	1468-69	1467-68	1466-67	1465-66	1464-65	1463-64	1462-63	1461-62	1460-61	1459-60	1458-59	1457-58	1456-57	1455-56	1454-55	1453-54	1452-53	1451-52	1450-51	1449-50	1448-49	1447-48	1446-47	1445-46	1444-45	1443-44	1442-43	1441-42	1440-41	1439-40	1438-39	1437-38	1436-37	1435-36	1434-35	1433-34	1432-33	1431-32	1430-31	1429-30	1428-29	1427-28	1426-27	1425-26	1424-25	1423-24	1422-23	1421-22	1420-21	1419-20	1418-19	1417-18	1416-17	1415-16	1414-15	1413-14	1412-13	1411-12	1410-11	1409-10	1408-09	1407-08	1406-07	1405-06	1404-05	1403-04	1402-03	1401-02	1400-01	1399-00	1398-99	1397-98	1396-97	1395-96	1394-95	1393-94	1392-93	1391-92	1390-91	1389-90	1388-89	1387-88	1386-87	1385-86	1384-85	1383-84	1382-83	1381-82	1380-81	1379-80	1378-79	1377-78	1376-77	1375-76	1374-75	1373-74	1372-73	1371-72	1370-71	1369-70	1368-69	1367-68	1366-67	1365-66	1364-65	1363-64	1362-63	1361-62	1360-61	1359-60	1358-59	1357-58	1356-57	1355-56	1354-55	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A	Law Company	Rate	Per	%	Per	Rate	Law Company	Rate	Per	%	Per
28	Quadrant	267 1/2	1	43	28	250	Quadrant	229 1/2	1	31 3/4	28
29	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	29	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	29
30	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	30	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	30
31	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	31	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	31
32	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	32	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	32
33	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	33	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	33
34	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	34	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	34
35	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	35	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	35
36	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	36	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	36
37	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	37	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	37
38	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	38	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	38
39	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	39	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	39
40	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	40	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	40
41	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	41	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	41
42	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	42	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	42
43	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	43	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	43
44	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	44	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	44
45	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	45	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	45
46	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	46	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	46
47	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	47	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	47
48	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	48	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	48
49	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	49	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	49
50	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	50	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	50
51	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	51	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	51
52	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	52	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	52
53	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	53	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	53
54	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	54	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	54
55	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	55	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	55
56	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	56	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	56
57	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	57	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	57
58	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	58	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	58
59	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	59	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	59
60	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	60	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	60
61	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	61	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	61
62	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	62	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	62
63	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	63	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	63
64	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	64	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	64
65	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	65	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	65
66	Quadrant	11 1/2	1	11 1/2	66	250	Quadrant	23 1/2	1	4	66
67	Quadrant	11									

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES			
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988	989	990	991
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996	997	998	999
1000	1001	1002	1003
1004	1005	1006	1007
1008	1009	1010	1011
1012	1013	1014	1015
1016	1017	1018	1019
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1100	1101	1102	1103
1104	1105	1106	1107
1108	1109	1110	1111
1112	1113	1114	1115
1116	1117	1118	1119
1120	1121	1122	1123
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1128	1129	1130	1131
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1172	1173	1174	1175
1176	1177	1178	1179
1180	1181	1182	1183
1184	1185	1186	1187
1188	1189	1190	1191
1192	1193	1194	1195
1196	1197	1198	1199
1200	1201	1202	1203
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1212	1213	1214	1215
1216	1217	1218	1219
1220	1221	1222	1223
1224	1225	1226	1227
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1232	1233	1234	1235
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1264	1265	1266	1267
1268	1269	1270	1271
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1296	1297	1298	1299
1300	1301	1302	1303
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183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600	601	602	603	604	605	606	607	608	609	610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619	620	621	622	623	624	625	626	627	628	629	630	631	632	633	634	635	636
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14	Female Gough	27%	28	27
15	Colombian	27%	29	27
16	Male	27%	30	27
17	Female	27%	31	27
18	Male	27%	32	27
19	Female	27%	33	27
20	Male	27%	34	27
21	Female	27%	35	27
22	Male	27%	36	27
23	Female	27%	37	27
24	Male	27%	38	27
25	Female	27%	39	27
26	Male	27%	40	27
27	Female	27%	41	27
28	Male	27%	42	27
29	Female	27%	43	27
30	Male	27%	44	27
31	Female	27%	45	27
32	Male	27%	46	27
33	Female	27%	47	27
34	Male	27%	48	27
35	Female	27%	49	27
36	Male	27%	50	27
37	Female	27%	51	27
38	Male	27%	52	27
39	Female	27%	53	27
40	Male	27%	54	27
41	Female	27%	55	27
42	Male	27%	56	27
43	Female	27%	57	27
44	Male	27%	58	27
45	Female	27%	59	27
46	Male	27%	60	27
47	Female	27%	61	27
48	Male	27%	62	27
49	Female	27%	63	27
50	Male	27%	64	27
51	Female	27%	65	27
52	Male	27%	66	27
53	Female	27%	67	27
54	Male	27%	68	27
55	Female	27%	69	27
56	Male	27%	70	27
57	Female	27%	71	27
58	Male	27%	72	27
59	Female	27%	73	27
60	Male	27%	74	27
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63	Female	27%	77	27
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65	Female	27%	79	27
66	Male	27%	80	27
67	Female	27%	81	27
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69	Female	27%	83	27
70	Male	27%	84	27
71	Female	27%	85	27
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73	Female	27%	87	27
74	Male	27%	88	27
75	Female	27%	89	27
76	Male	27%	90	27
77	Female	27%	91	27
78	Male	27%	92	27
79	Female	27%	93	27
80	Male	27%	94	27
81	Female	27%	95	27
82	Male	27%	96	27
83	Female	27%	97	27
84	Male	27%	98	27
85	Female	27%	99	27
86	Male	27%	100	27

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327	Western Ind.	250%	25	25	25				
328	Western Steel	250%	25	25	25				
329	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
330	International	250%	25	25	25				
331	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
332	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
333	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
334	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
335	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
336	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
337	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
338	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
339	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
340	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
341	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
342	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
343	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
344	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
345	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
346	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
347	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
348	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
349	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
350	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
351	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
352	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
353	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
354	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
355	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
356	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
357	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
358	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
359	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
360	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
361	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
362	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
363	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
364	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
365	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
366	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
367	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
368	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
369	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
370	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
371	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
372	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
373	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
374	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
375	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
376	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
377	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
378	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
379	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				
380	Western Union	250%	25	25	25				

1988				
High	Low	Close		Pct
SHORTS (under 5 years)				
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
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100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
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100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
100%	100%	Nov 94 1987	100%	
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tried. He would quiver at
back of his new stable
or approach. When the
was opened it took
days before he could
ventures out and he
was as frightened as
keys as he was of people.
ness, Mozart is beginning
and can now speak.

Mozart and donkeys like
fund raising costs are

Help Them
Save Their

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1996		Price			1996			Price		
High	Low	Open	+/-	%	High	Low	Open	+/-	%	
227	225	225	0	0.0	227	225	225	0	0.0	
228	226	226	0	0.0	228	226	226	0	0.0	
229	227	227	0	0.0	229	227	227	0	0.0	
230	228	228	0	0.0	230	228	228	0	0.0	
231	229	229	0	0.0	231	229	229	0	0.0	
232	230	230	0	0.0	232	230	230	0	0.0	
233	231	231	0	0.0	233	231	231	0	0.0	
234	232	232	0	0.0	234	232	232	0	0.0	
235	233	233	0	0.0	235	233	233	0	0.0	
236	234	234	0	0.0	236	234	234	0	0.0	
237	235	235	0	0.0	237	235	235	0	0.0	
238	236	236	0	0.0	238	236	236	0	0.0	
239	237	237	0	0.0	239	237	237	0	0.0	
240	238	238	0	0.0	240	238	238	0	0.0	
241	239	239	0	0.0	241	239	239	0	0.0	
242	240	240	0	0.0	242	240	240	0	0.0	
243	241	241	0	0.0	243	241	241	0	0.0	
244	242	242	0	0.0	244	242	242	0	0.0	
245	243	243	0	0.0	245	243	243	0	0.0	
246	244	244	0	0.0	246	244	244	0	0.0	
247	245	245	0	0.0	247	245	245	0	0.0	
248	246	246	0	0.0	248	246	246	0	0.0	
249	247	247	0	0.0	249	247	247	0	0.0	
250	248	248	0	0.0	250	248	248	0	0.0	
251	249	249	0	0.0	251	249	249	0	0.0	
252	250	250	0	0.0	252	250	250	0	0.0	
253	251	251	0	0.0	253	251	251	0	0.0	
254	252	252	0	0.0	254	252	252	0	0.0	
255	253	253	0	0.0	255	253	253	0	0.0	
256	254	254	0	0.0	256	254	254	0	0.0	
257	255	255	0	0.0	257	255	255	0	0.0	
258	256	256	0	0.0	258	256	256	0	0.0	
259	257	257	0	0.0	259	257	257	0	0.0	
260	258	258	0	0.0	260	258	258	0	0.0	
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[illegible][illegible]

ST Alford Lant	76	405	1	6.5	143	84	47	Reid	25	3.1	17
ST Angus	77	406	1	8	123	147	170	Reid	25	3.1	17
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ST Anne	116	535	2	11	217	276	299	Reid	25	3.1	17
ST Anne	116	536	2	11	217	277	300	Reid	25	3.1	17
ST Anne	116	537	2	11	217	278	301	Reid	25	3.1	17
ST Anne	1										

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Unusually, with patients and animals, what we want is to treat each one as a special case and can now spend his retirement years in contentment.

Please can you help us to care for Mozart and donkeys like him.

Please note our administration and fund raising costs are only 5.4p in the £1.

Please Help Us To Help Them

• The Donkey Sanctuary,
Please send me _____
• Don't Lick It, Spit it out.
• Don'ts, X's & O's.



When hearsay is admissible

In re Rahman

Before Lord Justice Staughton, Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Hutton

[Judgment December 11]

In deciding whether a person was an illegal entrant, the court was not limited to considering evidence which was admissible at common law and was entitled to take into account hearsay.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment in an appeal brought by the entrant, Saudur Rahman, from the refusal by Mr Justice Collins on June 29, 1996 to grant him a writ of habeas corpus.

The Court of Appeal unanimously dismissed the appeal on a point of law as to whether certain evidence relied upon by the Home Secretary was admissible. A majority of the court (Lord Justice Hutton dissenting) also dismissed the appeal on a point of fact that there was sufficient evidence to conclude that the entrant was an illegal immigrant.

Mr Michael Shrimpton for the entrant; Mr Mark Shaw for the secretary of state.

LORD JUSTICE HUTCHISON said that the entrant had sought to challenge the legality of his detention as an illegal entrant pursuant to paragraph 16 of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971.

The entrant claimed to be the son of Abdus Somad and his wife Momtaz Bibi and to have been born in Bangladesh on July 28, 1967. Abdus Somad, by virtue of his registration in 1960, a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies, enjoyed British citizenship and, in 1969, was living in the United Kingdom.

On May 29, 1989, the entrant, who had expressed the wish to join his alleged parents, was interviewed by an entry clearance officer at the British High Commission in Dhaka and was granted a certificate of entitlement to the right of abode in the United Kingdom where he arrived in 1989. He obtained a British passport on November 30, 1990.

In January 1991 the entrant returned to Bangladesh. On April 7, 1991 his wife, Rina Akhter, and a boy named Rone Ahmed whom she represented to be the child of herself and the entrant, applied for a certificate of entitlement to join the entrant in the United Kingdom.

On November 4, Rina Akhter gave birth to a boy, Jone Ahmed, and he was added to the application.

The entrant returned to the United Kingdom. While Rina's application was still pending the secretary of state received a denunciatory letter claiming that the boy Rone was not the entrant's and Rina's but the son of Rina's sister and that the entrant was not whom he claimed to be but a man named Mohammed Sarab Ali Talukder. A second denunciatory letter also asserted that the entrant was not the son of Abdus Somad.

The secretary of state, through entry clearance officers in Bangladesh, instituted inquiries about the entrant in two villages. It was common ground that the evidence, if presented in an admissible form and uncontradicted, was such as could justify the conclusion that deception had been established to the requisite standard.

It was also common ground that, unless at least some of the village visits evidence was taken into account, there was not sufficient evidence to support that conclusion.

The question to which the first issue gave rise was whether the evidence obliged to inquire into the truth of a question of fact on which an administrative decision had been based, was entitled to look at all the material on which the decision-maker legitimately relied or whether it was confined to considering such evidence as was presented in strictly admissible form.

Mr Justice Collins had admitted evidence of the village visits and in particular of interviews tendered by means of affidavits from immigration officers. Mr Shrimpton argued that all of that evidence was inadmissible, because it was hearsay and would be inadmissible in legal proceedings in this country.

However, that did not occur and both before Mr Justice Collins and on appeal the proceedings were treated formally as applications for a writ of habeas corpus. While his Lordship considered that that was unfortunate procedurally it had not affected the substance of the points which had to be considered.

It was common ground that the governing authority was *Khanjari* and that where the secretary of state sought to declare a person an illegal entrant, he was bound to take into account all relevant material making appropriate allowance for the weight which was to be attached to it which did not exclude the view that certain evidence should be disregarded if it was not worthy of any weight.

The first ground of appeal therefore failed. On the second factual issue, in his Lordship's assessment, the evidence of the village visits was so strong that one had to conclude that the entrant was not the natural son of Abdus Somad and that the contrary evidence did not suffice to displace that conclusion.

LORD JUSTICE HOBHOUSE said that the entrant was detained following a declaration by an immigration officer that the entrant was illegal. The entrant applied for a writ of habeas corpus requiring the secretary of state to release him and commenced proceedings for judicial review of the decision that he was an illegal entrant.

Mr Justice Clarke directed, inter alia, that the judicial review application should stand withdrawn. That assumed that the entrant would continue to be detained in custody. However, he was granted temporary admission and was released.

It would therefore have been

more satisfactory and more accurate if the proceedings by way of judicial review had been reinstated and the habeas corpus application had been treated as spent.

However, that did not occur and both before Mr Justice Collins and on appeal the proceedings were treated formally as applications for a writ of habeas corpus. While his Lordship considered that that was unfortunate procedurally it had not affected the substance of the points which had to be considered.

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Financial prejudice not established

Novelli SpA v Watkins

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Millett and Lord Justice Potter

[Judgment November 26]

In the absence of special circumstances, the need for insurers or other commercial organisations to make provision against an outstanding legal claim did not amount to financial prejudice which justified the striking out of the claim if there was inordinate and inexcusable delay in its prosecution.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing an appeal by the plaintiffs, Novelli SpA, against the decision of Mr Justice Gagehouse on July 21, 1995 to dismiss their action against the defendant representative Lloyd's underwriter, Mark Christopher Watkins, for want of prosecution.

The plaintiffs issued their writ, claiming payment under a policy of marine insurance, in June 1993, three months before the expiry of the limitation period. The claim was served on the defendant in July 1993.

The judge found that, thereafter, there was a 15-month period of inordinate and inexcusable delay on the part of the plaintiffs which had caused the insurers more than minimal prejudice by reason of the extended period during which they had to reserve in their books their proportion of the uninsured loss.

Miss Barbara Dohmann, QC, and Mr Ian Mill for the plaintiffs; Mr Timothy Young, QC, for the insurers.

LORD JUSTICE POTTER said that the only evidence of financial prejudice to the insurers had been submitted in their solicitor's affidavit.

"The amount of the reserve for the claim has to remain in the underwriters' books and as such the substantial amount of money in issue in the case has been unavailable for the amortisation of losses or the distribution of profits so far as the individual syndicates and their members are concerned. Thus the amount of the claim, plus contingencies for interest and costs, are tied up with the inevitable problems of cash flow, which are currently notorious in the market."

Such a generalised assertion of prejudice in relation to cash flow was not sufficient to establish financial prejudice. It was a consequence of the claim, not of the claimant's delay in prosecuting it, for provision had to be made when the claim was received, not when proceedings were commenced.

The ability to pay dividends might be affected in the year in which the provision was made. The only effect of subsequent delay in the prosecution of the claim was that the outstanding liability would be carried in the balance sheet for a longer period. However, the profit and loss account, and the ability to pay dividends, in later years would be unaffected.

Accordingly, delay in the prosecution of proceedings would normally (i) not affect the defendant's cash flow and (ii) not affect its profits or ability to pay dividends but (iii) would prolong the period during which it was obliged to carry a lower figure for net assets in its balance sheet.

The effect would be to reduce the trading profit, or increase the

trading loss, for the year in which the provision was made and increase the trading profit, or reduce the trading loss, in the year in which it was released. In the meantime the balance sheet would show an increase in the reserves to meet outstanding liabilities.

Nonetheless, the reserves were merely an accounting entry. It was not necessary to put cash aside to meet the claim, although it might be necessary to estimate when the claim would become due for payment and to ensure that there would then be cash to meet it. In the meantime, however, cash flow was not affected.

If there was a financial detriment, it was a consequence of the claim, not of the claimant's delay in prosecuting it, for provision had to be made when the claim was received, not when proceedings were commenced.

The ability to pay dividends might be affected in the year in which the provision was made. The only effect of subsequent delay in the prosecution of the claim was that the outstanding liability would be carried in the balance sheet for a longer period. However, the profit and loss account, and the ability to pay dividends, in later years would be unaffected.

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when the claim was first notified. If not released during the three-year period for which the accounts were made up, it would increase the annual reserve available to close and reduce the profits distributable or increase the losses borne by, names on the syndicate in the year when the claim was notified.

Subsequent delay in the prosecution of the claim would not affect names in later years at all, since they would have the benefit of the reserves carried forward at the expense of the former names.

Thus, the need to make provision against claims applied to any commercial organisation, whether or not carrying on an insurance business, although, in the case of insurers, prudent reservation was quintessentially an ordinary incident of their business and accounting procedures. In principle the same was true of any individual defendant, who must mentally at least put aside a sum to meet the claim.

So, in the absence of evidence of special circumstances showing that the defendant had sustained or been exposed to a particular and significant loss due to the continued existence of the contingent liability during the period of culpable delay, presumed loss could not be properly regarded as financial prejudice for the purpose of the rule under consideration.

Accordingly, there was no evidence upon which the judge could properly have held that the necessary financial prejudice had been established.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Millett agreed.

Solicitors: Clintons; Middleton Potts.

Plaintiff failed to intervene

Corporacion Nacional del Cobre de Chile v Sogemin Metals Ltd and Others

Before Mr Justice Carnwath

[Judgment November 18]

In an action based on the alleged bribery of the plaintiff's employee by the defendants, neither in law nor in equity did the defendant's liability fail to be extinguished or reduced if it was shown that the plaintiff had had the opportunity to discover and investigate the alleged bribery but had failed to do so.

Mr Justice Carnwath said in the Chancery Division when allowing a motion by the plaintiffs, Corporacion Nacional del Cobre de Chile ("Codelco") to strike out paragraphs of the defence of Sogemin Metals Ltd, Sogemin Metals Inc, Mr David A. Davis and Mr Paul Tweedle Risco.

Mr Ian Geering, QC, and Mr Anthony de Gaur Robinson for the plaintiffs; Mr Charles Falconer, QC, and Miss Rosemary Ismail for the first three defendants.

MR JUSTICE CARNWATH said that Codelco was owned by the Republic of Chile. It was the largest copper producer in the world and was a substantial trader in metal futures.

The first defendant was a United Kingdom based commodity broker which did business with Codelco between 1989 and 1994. The second defendant was an associated United States company and the third defendant was an employee of the second defendant. The fourth defendant had not entered an appearance.

Codelco claimed that the defendants were party to a conspiracy to bribe Mr Juan Pablo Davis, the alleged bribery future dependent between 1989 and 1994, by payments made via its representatives in Chile, to enter into a number of contracts and to do so on "unfavourable or off-market terms and/or terms which included a bribe or other necessary commissions or charges".

The defendants admitted having made payments to representatives in Chile, but denied that it was party to or had knowledge of any bribery. They denied the contracts were unfavourable or off-market or included such commissions or charges.

In law the plaintiffs made a restitutionary claim in respect of the value of the bribes and sought damages for fraud, conspiracy and procuring breach of contract.

In equity they claimed that the defendants were liable to account to them for the payments as constructive trustees, and also for profits made on the contracts. They relied on the defendants' alleged "dishonest" assistance in breach of trust.

Before it could be decided fairly whether the parties' pleadings disclosed a valid defence, it was necessary to work out what precisely it meant. The defendants could not improve their position by a smokescreen of obscurity.

What the paragraphs in the defence came down to was a plea that simply because officers and employees of Codelco were aware of the relationship between Sogemin and Codelco, and Mr Davis's trading was overseen by a

committee within Codelco, Codelco was at least partly responsible for its own losses.

In effect they said that Codelco had the opportunity to investigate and failed to do so; but not that they were put on notice in any way of any irregularity.

The plaintiffs submitted that such an assertion did not add up to a defence to a claim based on fraud, whether at law or in equity. They relied principally on the judgment of Mr Justice Mummery in *Alliance and Leicester Building Society v Edgestow Ltd* (1993) 1 WLR 1462 where he had held that contributory negligence was not a defence to deceit.

His Lordship said that that was a fully argued and consistent judgment and it would not be appropriate to depart from it.

In *Gran Gelato Ltd v Richfield (Group) Ltd* (1992) Ch 560 contributory negligence was held to be in principle available as a defence to a claim under the Misrepresentation Act 1967.

But his Lordship agreed with the *Alliance and Leicester* case that the decision in the *Gelato* case raised an analogy with negligence and did not assist arguments in respect of deceit, or the principle that "carelessness in not making inquiries provides no answer to a claim that the plaintiff has done that which the representor intended that he should do".

In regard to the claim in equity, in the case of *Barton v Armstrong* (1976) AC 104 where the defendant sought to avoid deeds relating to sale of shares on the grounds of coercion, it was held that the

equitable rule which enabled a contract entered into as a result of fraudulent misrepresentation to be set aside applied in cases of duress.

However, there appeared to be no direct authority on the availability of contributory negligence, or its equivalent in equity, as a defence to a claim based on bribery, as opposed to deceit or duress.

But his Lordship could see no sensible reason for drawing a distinction. If the defendants had dishonestly induced the plaintiffs' employee to act to the plaintiffs' disadvantage, it should not matter whether he had done so by deception, by threats or by bribery. As in the case of deceit, the defendant could not reduce his responsibility merely because the plaintiff had the opportunity to intervene but failed to do so.

There needed to be something more something to put him on notice of the dishonesty and a consequent failure by him of reasonable prudence. There was nothing of that kind pleaded in the defence.

There was no allegation that the plaintiff knew or had reason to suspect dishonesty or of conduct so egregious that he was the author of his own misfortune. If that sort of allegation was to be made, it had to be pleaded.

The mere fact that the plaintiff had the opportunity to discover the fraud and failed to do so was not a defence or a ground for reducing damages and the imputed paragraphs of the defence should be struck out.

Solicitors: Herbert Smith; Simmons & Simmons.

Responsibility of medical referee

Regina v Milling, Ex parte West Yorkshire Police Authority

Before Mr Justice Scott Baker

[Judgment November 11]

A medical referee, deciding whether a former police officer was totally disabled and incapable of earning any money in any employment was required to direct his attention to whether the disability completely destroyed all earning capacity or whether the officer could earn money from some other employment.

Mr Justice Scott Baker so stated in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing an application for judicial review by the West Yorkshire Police Authority against a decision of Mr A. Milling, medical referee, that former police officer Steven Pollard was totally disabled within regulation 32(4)(a) of the 1987 Regulations. He had to ask himself

any employment within the meaning of regulation 32(4)(a) of the Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations (SI 1987 No 158).

Mr Pollard was injured on duty in 1983 and medically retired with a pension in 1985. He was assessed as having 50 per cent disability for life by a doctor on behalf of the Department of Social Security in 1990. He subsequently claimed total disablement and entitlement to a disablement gratuity under regulation 4 of the 1987 Regulations. The referee was referred to the medical referee.

Mr David Mitchell for the police authority; Mr Philip Moon for Mr Milling; Mr Benedict Paton for Mr Pollard as interested party.

MR JUSTICE SCOTT BAKER said that the medical referee had to consider the definition of "totally disabled" within regulation 32(4)(a). He had to ask himself

whether Mr Pollard was "incapable" by reason of disablement "of earning any money in any employment". It was a simple English expression. The broad question was left to the medical referee.

The police authority submitted that the expression should be construed tightly and strictly. It was a payment on top of the ordinary pension.

The medical referee and Mr Pollard had argued for a wider construction. The medical referee suggested that the words envisaged an employer/employee relationship and not self-employed status. Earning and employment connoted receipt of income in relation to services. The picture was one of earning rather than a one-off payment.

In his Lordship's judgment, the critical word was "any" qualifying

both money and employment. The medical referee was required to direct his attention to whether the former officer's disability completely destroyed his earning capacity.

If he was capable of earning some money from some employment then he could not qualify as totally disabled. It was not helpful to try to distinguish between employment and self-employment. The decision was a matter for the medical referee on the facts.

In his Lordship's judgment, the concept of total disablement in the 1987 Regulations was different from its general sense. The regulations were directed to a person's earning capacity and not his ability to do other tasks.

Solicitors: Sharpe Pritchard, Hussain & Singh, Manchester; Hempsons, Manchester; Russell Jones & Walker, Manchester.

Power to extend time for challenge to arrangement

Tager v Westpac Banking Corporation and Others

Before Judge Weeks, QC

[Judgment November 12]

The court had jurisdiction to extend the period of 28 days provided by section 262 of the Insolvency Act 1986 for challenging the decision of the creditors' meeting convened to consider a debtor's proposed voluntary arrangement with his creditors and the same period provided by rule 5.17 of the Insolvency Rules (SI 1986 No 1925) for appealing the decision of the chairman of the meeting.

Judge Judge Weeks, QC, sitting as a judge of the Chancery Division, so held in a reserved judgment on an application by Ousay Tager for, inter alia, an order pursuant to section 376 of the 1986 Act that the time within which he might make (i) an application under section 262 of that Act and (ii) an application by way of an appeal pursuant to rule 5.17(5) of the 1986 Rules should be extended.

The respondents to the application were Westpac Banking Corporation, Arab Bank plc and other creditors.

Mr Glen Davis for Mr Tager; Mr Robin Knowles for the creditors.

HIS LORDSHIP said that Mr Tager had debts of over £30 million arising from guarantees which he had given in respect of commercial loans to various property companies. He was unable to pay his debts in full and proposed

an individual voluntary arrangement with his creditors.

After the creditors met to consider his proposal for a voluntary arrangement, the chairman's report was filed on December 18, 1995. On February 27, 1996 Mr Tager made an application under section 262 of the 1986 Act for a declaration that there had been a material irregularity at the meeting.

Section 262 of the 1986 Act provided: "(3) An application under this section shall not be made after the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day on which the report of the creditors' meeting was made to the court under section 259."

The period for challenging the meeting's decision under the Act was therefore the same as the period for appealing the chairman's decision under rule 5.17.

Section 262 fell into the second group of parts in the Insolvency Act as did section 376 which was provided: "Whereby any provision in this group of parts or by the rules the time for doing anything is limited, the court may extend the time either before or after it has expired, on such terms, if any, as it thinks fit."

In the field of bankruptcy, there might be an inherent tension between the interests of the debtor and the interests of the creditors as well as the age-old conflict between certainty and justice.

Mr Knowles submitted that there were two reasons for rejecting the argument that time should be extended under section 376. One was that section 262(3) was couched in negative terms: "An application shall not be made..." as was rule 5.17(5).

Other provisions in the rules which imposed a time limit on appeals or applications were framed in positive terms, for example rule 7.47(4), relating to the rescission of winding-up orders, and rule 7.50 relating to appeals against decisions of the secretary of state.

His Lordship regarded that as a distinction without a difference and was fortified in that conclusion by authority on certain words in the Bankruptcy Act 1914 to which he felt entitled to refer given Mr Justice Hoffmann's remarks in *In re Deben* (No 784 of 1991) [1992] Ch 554, 558.

If Parliament had intended in 1986 that the limits in respect of decisions at a creditors' meeting in

a proposed individual voluntary arrangement should be invariable, then the course to adopt was not to remain that negative wording and to introduce positive wording for other time limits but to strengthen the negative wording by making it clear that the power to extend did not apply.

The other point advanced for not constraining section 376 as inapplicable to the time limits in section 262 and rule 5.17(5) was that to do so would create an anomalous distinction between individual voluntary arrangements and company voluntary arrangements.

Company voluntary arrangements were dealt with in Part I of the 1986 Act and in section 63(3) there was a similar time limit of 28 days for the making of the statutory applications to the court. There was, however, no provision in the first group of parts corresponding to section 376 in the second group of parts.

Extension of time was dealt with in the 1986 Rules under rule 4.3 which provided: "Whereby any provision of the Act or rules about winding up, the time for doing anything is limited, the court may extend the time, either before or after it has expired, on such terms, if any, as it thinks fit."

That power had been extended to administrations but it did not apply to company voluntary arrangements. The anomaly here was explicable for historical reasons. Section 376 had its origins in section 105(4) of the Bankruptcy Act 1983 which was repeated word

for word without some capital letters in section 109(4) of the 1914 Act.

The Companies Acts never had any similar general power to extend time. Whether the extension of the power in rule 4.3 to winding up was deliberate or accidental his Lordship did not know.

But he did not think he would be justified by the apparent difference in treatment of company voluntary arrangements and individual voluntary arrangements into tarring the clear wording of section 376 so as to preclude appeals relating to individual voluntary arrangements.

He therefore concluded that there was jurisdiction to extend time. In exercising it he considered the circumstances and the fact that the delay of two months was not long and had no hesitation in using the power in section 376 to extend the time.

Solicitors: Isadore Goldman; Clifford Chance and Freere Cholmely Bischoff.

Corrections

In *Jones v Tower Boot Co Ltd* (The Times December 16) the composition of the Employment Appeal Tribunal appealed from was Mr Justice Buckley, Mr A. C. Blyth and Mr D. G. Grieve.

In *R v MAFF, Ex parte First City Trading and Others* (The Times December 20) Mr Peter Duffy also appeared with Mr Kenneth Parker, QC, for MAFF.

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LAW

Won't get fooled again

Firms hard hit
by the recession
have become
twice shy, says
Edward Fennell

What has 1996 been like for the top commercial law firms? One revealing insight comes from recent stories in the legal press of partners quitting bluechip firms because of the level of overwork and stress. Both Slaughter & May and Simmons & Simmons have suffered in this way, and complaints of excessive work can be found in many City practices.

The fact that people are starting to "leave the kitchen" shows just how hot commercial law has become. During the past year the temperature has been raised; now that the recession is over, the level of transactions is high.

Terence Kyle, the managing partner of Linklaters & Paines, says: "The real question is not where the work is going to come from but how to attract the most interesting transactions and how to carry them out most effectively."

However, weighed down with work they may be, though, firms are not rushing to recruit en masse. The danger of over-recruitment has been remembered from the 1980s, and most managing partners are trying to squeeze ever greater productivity out of their teams. But with endless weekend work, it is not surprising that some senior lawyers now want out.

Nick Barwood, of Hephherd Winstanley & Pugh in Southampton, says he is receiving applications from London lawyers who want to escape



the pressure of the City and still do 'high-quality work'. His firm, with its long-standing links to B&Q, carved out a national reputation by leading the fight on Sunday trading and now has a retail practice to match that of any London outfit.

But even Hephherd is adamant that it will not recruit just to increase its headcount. "Our reputation is based on specialist expertise and we do not want to dilute that," Mr Barwood says.

**The good
solicitors
are working
long hours**

The result is that good firms in the regional centres, just as much as in London, are working ever longer hours. Stephen Mayson, a management consultant, says that the increased activity is simply amplifying the gap between the good firms and the mediocre. Clients are becoming more selective, which means that successful solicitors are taking more of the market. The less effective firms, beset by the recession and their own "dash

for growth" in the 1980s, are not being carried upwards by a rising tide. Instead, they are stuck with the underlying problems of high overheads, weak management and inadequate expertise. "They hoped," says Mr Mayson, "that when the economy came out of recession, their fortunes would turn. But that has not happened."

Yet while many middle-sized firms are floundering, able individual partners are setting up on their own to provide what they do best without the encumbrance of high overheads.

Ian Clark and Robert Ricketts, who both formerly worked for large City firms, have just completed their first full year in Lincoln's Inn Fields as the niche practice Clark Ricketts. They are specialists in the aviation scene and through writing, lecturing and membership of trade bodies, are entrenched in the close-knit aviation establishment. Mr Clark says: "We have been gratified by how many of our former clients have come with us. We can now offer a highly specialist service without the

problem of the very high fees charged by the larger firms." Mr Clark believes that the legal services market is polarising, as clients seek either first-rank all-round services (from the likes of Allen & Overy and Slaughter & May) or the benefits of specialist expertise from niche practices such as his own.

This argument is borne out by the two big developments on this year's legal scene. First, the merger of Cameron Hewitt and McKenna & Co to create Cameron McKenna confirms the move towards larger firms that offer all-round excellence. Secondly, it now seems clear that accountants are going to be making a strong play to develop top legal practices. The Arthur Andersen experiment with Garrett & Co seems to be paying off. Julia Chain, Garrett's managing partner, says: "Our success this year has vindicated Arthur Andersen's decision to develop its network

of law firms. It has shown that we can offer what clients want." Most top accountancy firms are now laying their plans for UK legal practices, and a merger of a top accountancy and a top law firm is not impossible. Peter Cole, the managing partner of Everheds, says that they would look seriously at an approach from a Big Six firm of accountants.

Many managing partners, meanwhile, point out that the traditional and career structure within law firms has to be reviewed and that the expectations of young lawyers must be changed.

The mass production of partners during the 1980s has been an object lesson in how not to do it. In well-run firms, partners are likely to become an increasingly elite group who manage strategically, while a new class of legal managers emerges composed of those who are good technically but lack the all-round skills required of partners.

**'Partners
are likely
to become
an elite'**

Jeffrey Jannuzzo on two fast-track UN agreements

Two key events have occurred in mankind's first globally decided programme of war reparations. Two weeks ago, the United Nations let Iraq begin its first oil sales since it invaded Kuwait six years ago, with automatic seizure of 30 per cent of the proceeds for the UN's war claims fund. And last week the UN War Claims Commission in Geneva announced its first decision on a corporate-governmental claim: the cost to Kuwait of extinguishing the oilwell fires started by Saddam Hussein's troops as they fled the battlefield.

The UN commission decided at its outset in 1991 that it would put humanitarian claims before commercial ones, and has virtually completed the more than two million personal cases, for death, torture and destroyed property. Now that oil-for-reparations sales have begun, the injured will start getting compensation.

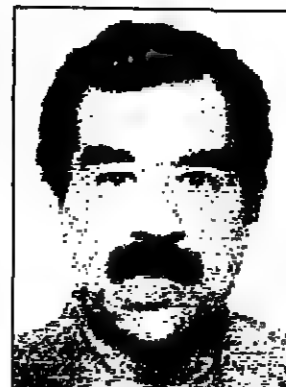
The business world waited to see how the UN would handle corporate-governmental claims. The announced plans were to provide fair procedural rights to Iraq, but to brook no delay, neither from Iraqi foot-dragging nor from endless hearings from panels that liked their jobs too much.

The work of the first panel shows that the UN will act fast and will safeguard Iraq's right to a fair hearing without letting the aggressor nation control the schedule. This panel also functioned far more like civil law inquiries than common law judges. It took on the job of investigation and verification, rather than relying on the parties to fight it out.

Kuwait began preparing for the well blowout claim in autumn 1990, shortly after the invasion, when the oil company managers who escaped met in London and received reports that the Iraqis were wiring the wellheads with explosives. They hired the engineering firm Bechtel and laid plans to extinguish well fires if Iraq struck the match.

In 1995, the UN Compensation Commission (the UNCC) chose the panel to hear this \$1 billion claim. In lieu of warehouses of records, Ku-

**Deals
settle
Gulf
costs**



Saddam paying reparations

wait submitted a detailed accountants' report by Touche Ross; the records were held for UN inspection. The three commissioners considered the Kuwaiti submissions and issued their first procedural order in November 1995, with extensive interrogatories for Kuwait's response by February 1996. Iraq was given until April 1996 to respond.

In May 1996, the panel issued a second procedural order, with a June 1996 response date. (Iraq was given a final opportunity to reply by September 1996, but did not take it.) Then in July 1996, a UN verification team went to Kuwait to inspect the underlying records, including one of the commissioners along with accounting and legal consultants from the UNCC.

A week of oral hearings followed in July and August 1996, where the Iraqis argued that Allied bombing and artillery, not them, destroyed the nearly 800 vandalised wells. The panel could have bogged down in well-by-well causation trials, but declined to be sidetracked, and ruled that the

evidence showed deliberate Iraqi detonation of wells, even if some were also damaged by Allied action.

It also applied Decision 7 of the UNCC Governing Council, which previously determined that compensable loss included loss from military action by either side. That decision was in effect a vote of the Security Council, because the governing council is the Security Council nations sitting in committee. In this crucial first case, we see proof that the claims process is controlled by the world community, not by the mere conscience of judges or the will of victorious allies. Since the UNCC was established, nearly a third of the world's countries have sat on the governing council, and all their decisions have been taken by consensus.

The panel's decision was confirmed by the governing council last week, a year after the first procedural order. Not bad in a world where mere million-dollar international claims can take a decade.

The panel's grittiest work was deciding which costs could be apportioned to the well blowout control claim, and which should be considered elsewhere. For example, Kuwait had to buy capital equipment to fight the fires, and it acknowledged that equipment had continuing value. Eventually, Kuwait was awarded \$610,048,547. About \$337 million was transferred to other claims for later consideration. Interest was handled by the panel's choice of a date, October 15, 1991, a fair midpoint in the expenses. The governing council will determine the interest rate.

The next round of corporate-governmental cases will start in early 1997. Commissioners have already been chosen and test cases will establish general rules, to be applied to all similar claims. When the well fires were burning, no one thought reparations were possible. Now the UNCC is sprinting to the finish line.

● The author is an international lawyer with Layton Brooks & Hecht in New York.

● Queen's Counsel will return after the break.

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RACING: TRAINERS WAIT UNTIL LAST MINUTE ON RUNNING PLANS

Doubts surround shape of King George field

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE curse of small fields, which has dogged this National Hunt season, looks set to hit the Peremps King George VI Chase at Kempton — if the weather does not go one better by killing off Boxing Day's showpiece.

Only eight runners were declared yesterday for the £100,000-added three-mile event, but there is a question mark against the participation of half the field because of the state of the ground which is being dried out by bitterly cold winds.

RICHARD EVANS

Naip: ANGELO'S DOUBLE (2.00 Newton Abbot)
Next best: Mrs Em (12.45 Wincanton)

Although the weathermen are predicting freezing temperatures across Britain until the weekend, a local forecast suggested the Sunbury course may avoid the worst of the icy blast and be able to stage its most popular race day of the year.

However, the trainers of Rough Quest, Trying Again and Could Be Better all plan to walk the course to decide if the ground is too fast for their horses — while Mr Mulligan is battling to recover from a bruised foot.

Terry Casey, trainer of Rough Quest, the Grand National winner, said yesterday: "The horse comes first. We don't want the ground to firm up. It's not looking very hopeful but one never knows and we will just have to keep our fingers crossed."

Trying Again is a Kempton specialist but prefers the mud and David Goldfing, his trainer, said: "I wouldn't put it as strongly as to say there has to be a downpour, but he certainly won't run if the ground is last on the day."

Charlie Brooks, trainer of Could Be Better, last season's Hennessy Gold Cup winner, added: "He wants to get his toe in and doesn't enjoy last ground."

Mr Mulligan bruised a foot



Casey, right, and Fitzgerald are keeping a watchful eye on the weather for their King George hope, Rough Quest

when he stood on a stone last Thursday, but Noel Chance is hopeful. "He had a shoe on today and he walked and trotted sound. Provided there is no deterioration, he should run."

The national weathermen are forecasting frost at night until the weekend with temperatures in the North and

Scotland falling as low as -8C. However, officials at Kempton are optimistic they will miss the worst of the cold snap.

Sue Ellen, managing director of United Racecourses, said: "Although the regional forecast is not brilliant, the local forecast is much better. It was -1.1C last night and is 3.7C and sunny today. There would

have been no question of an inspection today."

Peter McNeile, clerk of the course at Kempton, added: "The temperature has been below zero the last two nights but it hasn't affected the ground."

Ayr already fears it will lose its Boxing Day fixture for the second year running and plans an inspection for 10am tomorrow. "We had quite a lot of frost last night and we certainly could not have raced today. The forecast is not good with more frost expected," Mark Kershaw, clerk of the Scottish course, said.

At Wincanton, the omens are not good. "There is no frost in the ground but, judging by the forecast, things look pretty dire," Ian Renton, clerk of the course, said.

Adam Waterworth, racecourse manager at Huntingdon, reported: "If the forecast is correct, then we will struggle to race. The worst of the weather appears to be forecast for Christmas Day night. The plan is to hold an inspection at 7.30am on Boxing Day."

Newton Abbot is often raceable when other meetings fall to a cold snap and the Devon track is again optimistic. "The forecast is okay and we might even have some rain, so frost is our only slight worry."

Wetherby is also bullish. "We are hopeful as there are no problems at present and we could have raced today. The forecast is wintry but not too bad."

Although Market Rasen could not have raced on Saturday, the course had improved by yesterday. "The forecast is somewhat pessimistic but we have a lot of new ground to race on, which will take a great deal of frost than used areas."

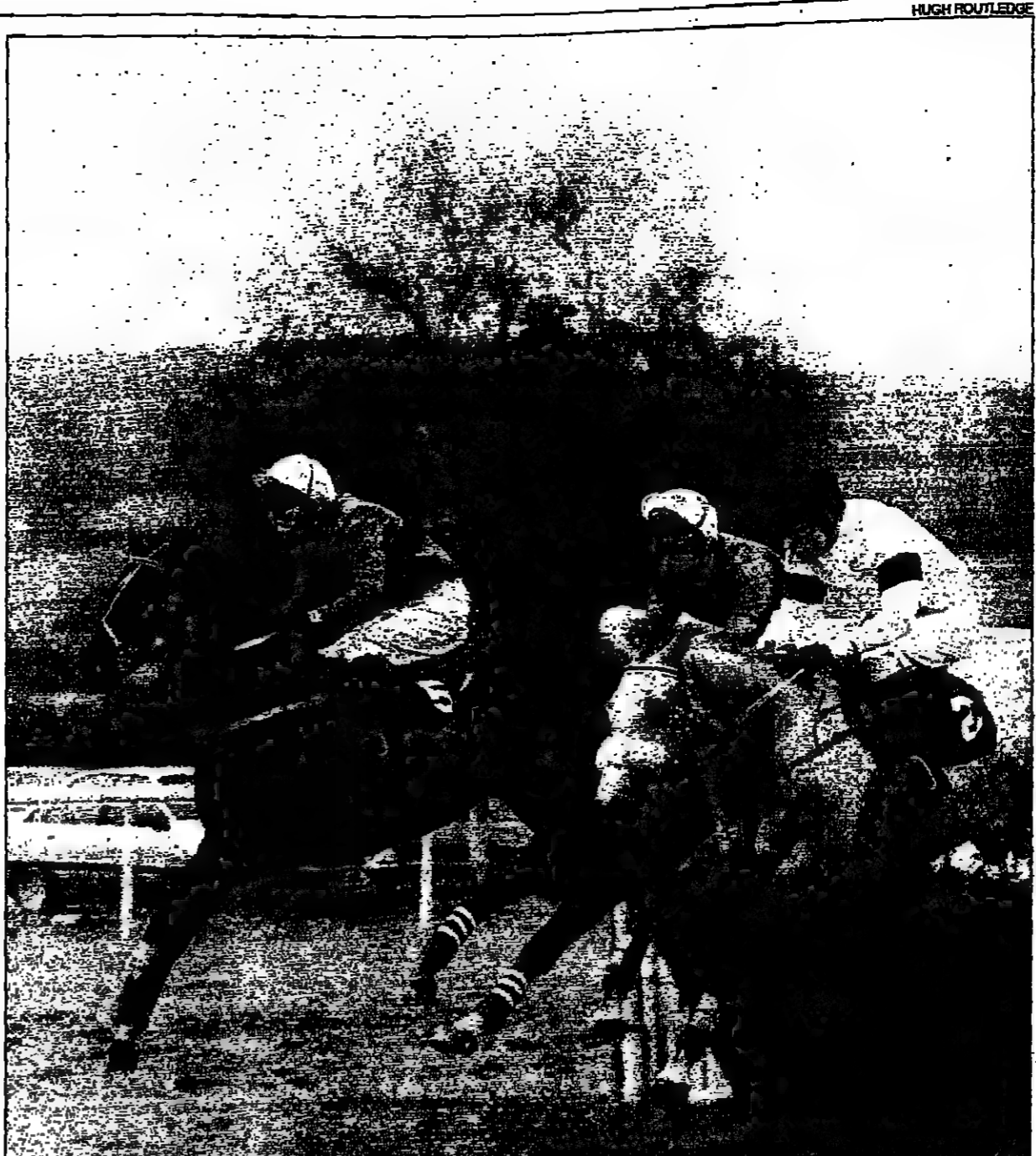
Hereford will not make any decision before Christmas Day, but it would have "touch and go" whether racing could have taken place today. At Sedgemoor, a spokesman said: "The weather is wet and we have a good cloud cover. We have no problems at the moment." Wolverhampton is expecting a "nasty frost" tomorrow night.

Richard Evans's TV Guide will appear in the Boxing Day edition.

BIG RACE LINE-UP

2.15 PEREMPS KING GEORGE VI CHASE	C4
(Grade 1: £83,325; 3m) (8 runners)	
401 4420-25 BARTON BANK 40 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) D. Nicholson 10-11-10 ... A. McGeary 85	
402 4420-25 COULDBE BETTER 20 (D.F.S.) (Mr. J. Mould) C. Brooks 11-10-10 ... D. Bradley 85	
403 1111-14 MR MULLIGAN 10 (D.F.S.) (Mr. W. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... A. McGeary 78	
404 2121-14 NATHAN LAD 10 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 78	
405 1911-14 ONE MAN 34 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 78	
406 1911-14 ROUGH QUEST 9 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 78	
407 1212-14 STRONG PROMISE 31 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 78	
408 1911-14 TRYING AGAIN 18 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 78	

SETTING: 4-7 One Man, 4-1 Rough Quest, 5-1 Strong Promise, 9-1 Barton Bank, 20-1 Mr Mulligan, 25-1 Trying Again, 33-1 Nathan Lad, 50-1 Could Be Better
1996 (for at Sandown Park) ONE MAN 8-11-10 R. Duncanson (11-4) W. G. Richards 11 m



The grey Sleepit, who was subsequently purchased by Brasher, on his way to victory at Ludlow yesterday

Brasher enjoys early present

CHRIS BRASHER, the former Olympic champion, purchased an early Christmas present and then promptly paid most of the expenses after Maid For Adventure carried his colours to victory at Ludlow yesterday.

Brasher, who won the 3,000 metres steeplechase at the 1956 Melbourne Games, outbid the trainer, Bill Turner, to secure Sleepit, winner of the Tanners Cava Conditional Jockeys' Selling Handicap Hurdle, for 3,600 guineas.

Brasher showed he retained plenty of his old dash when hurrying to the winner's enclosure to welcome back Maid For Adventure, who took the Hooch Rousell Panatier EBF Novices' Hurdle in style under Barry Fenton. "It

must be my lucky day," Brasher said. "I've bought a horse and almost paid for it by winning with one of my own."

Maid For Adventure's trainer, Henrietta Knight, said of her ten-length winner: "She was bought to go chasing and that's what she will ultimately do. But for this season, she'll be aimed at the final of the race at Newbury in March."

The Wantage trainer added: "Chris kindly let Barry keep the mount as our stable jockey, Jason Tiley, is here today, but Barry gave her such a good ride at Newbury last time and he decided to stay loyal to him."

Tiley bounced back from six weeks on the sidelines after sustaining bruised kidneys in a schooling accident when

Too Sharp became Knight's second winner of the day in the Tanners Burgundy Handicap Chase.

"I lost three pints of blood and had to have a transfusion," Tiley reported. "But I've been riding out for Henrietta for three weeks and everything seems to be fine now, especially as I've ridden a winner on my first ride back."

Richard Johnson, last term's champion conditional jockey, gained his fifth winner of the term after Super Coin took advantage of Holy Wanderer's last-term mishap to land the Tanners Wines Novices' Chase.

Gerry Hogan, rider of Holy Wanderer, gave up his remaining ride of the afternoon after being badly bruised and shaken in the nasty-looking incident.

COMPREHENSIVE FORM GUIDE TO THE EIGHT CONTENDERS

BARTON BANK

Nov 16, Cheltenham, good to firm: see Strong Promise.
Nov 2, Wetherby, good to firm: see One Man.
Apr 27, Sandown, good to firm: (11-6) 171 7th to Life Of A Lord (11-10) (3m 5f 110yd, grade II handicap chase, £28,906, 17 m).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good to soft: see Rough Quest.

Jan 6, Sandown, good to soft: see One Man.

COULDBE BETTER

Nov 30, Newbury, good: (11-10) 78 8th to Coombe Hill (10-0) (3m 2f, 110yd, grade II handicap chase, £28,906, 11 m).

Nov 20, Haydock, good: (11-12) 41 2nd to Unguided Missile (11-0) (3m, handicap chase, £10,036, 4 m).

Apr 20, Ayr, good: (10-2) pulled up before 4 out behind McCracken Bay (10-0) (4m 11 grade II handicap chase, £28,906, 20 m).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good to soft: see Rough Quest.

MR MULLIGAN

Dec 7, Cheltenham, good to soft: see Trying Again.

Apr 17, Cheltenham, good to soft: see Nathan Lad.

Feb 14, Ascot, good to soft: (11-12) beat Nathan Lad (11-5) 191 3m 110yd, grade I novice chase, £18,850, 10 m).

NATHAN LAD

Dec 18, Bangor, good: (11-10) 28 6th to Freddie Muck (11-0) (3m, handicap chase, £24,769, 11 m).

Mar 13, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-4) beat Mr Mulligan (11-4) 81 (3m 11, grade I novice chase, £24,769, 12 m).

Feb 14, Ascot, good to soft: see Mr Mulligan.

ONE MAN

Nov 2, Wetherby, good: (11-10) beat Barton Bank (11-10) 71 (3m 11, grade II chase, £18,500, 4 m).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good to soft: see Rough Quest.

Jan 6, Sandown, good to soft: (11-10) beat Monsieur Le Cure (11-10) 141 with Barton Bank (11-10) pulled before 2 out (3m 110yd, grade I chase, £28,935, 11 m).

ROUGH QUEST

Dec 17, Folkestone, good to soft: (10-12) beat Dorian d'Eschval (10-12) 31 (2m 4f 110yd, novice hurdle, £28,935, 14 m).

Mar 30, Aintree, good: (10-7) beat Encore Un Pau (10-0) 141 (4m 4f, grade II handicap chase, £12,354, 27 m).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good: (12-0) 41 2nd to Tropical Call (12-0) with Could Be Better (12-0) 191 3rd, Barton Bank (12-0) 31 4th and One Man (12-0) neck and 81 8th (2m 2f 110yd, grade I chase, £13,156, 10 m).

STRONG PROMISE

Nov 23, Ascot, good to firm: (10-8) beat Major Bell (11-0) 11 (4m 4f, grade II limited handicap chase, £25,984, 8 m).

Nov 16, Cheltenham, good to firm: (10-0) head 2nd to Challenger Du Luc (10-0) with Barton Bank (11-8) 191 3m 110yd, grade II handicap chase, £25,970, 12 m).

Nov 2, Ascot, good to firm: (11-4) beat Minor Key (11-1) 271 (2m 2f 110yd, novice chase, £24,986, 2 m).

Oct 29, Cheltenham, good to firm: (12-0) beat Pong Weng (12-0) with Mr Mulligan (11-12) 121 4f, grade II limited handicap chase, £18,822, 7 m).

Nov 20, Kempton, good to soft: (11-3) beat Old Bridge (11-3) 71 (2m 4f 110yd, handicap chase, £4,710, 2 m).

Apr 17, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-11) beat Albat (11-4) 41 (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,802, 7 m).

Mar 21, Wincanton, good to soft: (12-3) beat Cartway (11-3) a distance (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,793, 4 m).

Selection: ONE MAN (nap)

TRYING AGAIN

Dec 7, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-1) 141 2nd to Belmont King (10-8) with Mr Mulligan (11-12) 121 4f, grade II limited handicap chase, £18,822, 7 m).

Nov 20, Kempton, good to soft: (11-3) beat Old Bridge (11-3) 71 (2m 4f 110yd, handicap chase, £4,710, 2 m).

Apr 17, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-11) beat Albat (11-4) 41 (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,802, 7 m).

Mar 21, Wincanton, good to soft: (12-3) beat Cartway (11-3) a distance (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,793, 4 m).

Selection: ONE MAN (nap)

Going concerns end Algan's challenge

ALGAN, the winner of the King George VI Chase two years ago, was yesterday pulled out of the big race because of the ground. The French horse, whose trainer, Francois Doumen, has won the event four times, will not be risked as the going at Kempton is considered too fast.

The decision leaves Barton Bank and the odds-on favourite, One Man, as the only previous King George winners among the line-up, although the latter's victory was achieved at Sandown Park.

Doumen left his Lamorlaye stable, for which he has won the last two years, leaving a field of eight.

This week, but Algan was not among them.

"It is purely because of the ground. It's a shame because he is so well," Doumen said. "I have talked to trainer friends and the clerk of the course every day but I had to make a decision last night."

"All through his career Algan has performed his best only on soft ground. There was no point in him going because the weather is freezing and even if it rained now it would not be enough."

Algan was one of three withdrawals at yesterday's declaration stage. The others were Sound, Nisan and Regret, leaving a field of eight.

Land Afar booked for Leopardstown

LAND AFAR travels to Ireland to tackle Danoli in the Denny Gold Medal Chase at Leopardstown on Boxing Day. An Irish Racing Correspondent writes.

The Paul Webber-trained gelding has come off second-best in his clashes with the Irish star in the last two Champion Hurdles, most recently finishing tenth, to Danoli's fourth, behind Collier Bay at Cheltenham last March.

He has also come off second-best in his last two outings over fences. At Cheltenham, a six-length defeat against Colliere, and at Sandown Park, when rallying close home only to fail by a

neck against Mulligan. He did, however, make a winning steepchasing debut at Kempton Park in October, readily beating Amancio by five lengths.

Danoli, who has confirmed his status as the most popular National Hunt performer in Ireland after his comeback from a life-threatening injury last term, will be attempting to get his chasing career back on track in Thursday's £35,000-added contest.

Tom Foley's stable star won his first two starts over fences, at Clonmel and Naas, but fell at the third in the race won by Durans Pride from See More Business at Fairyhouse last time out.

KEMPTON PARK

THUNDERER	2.15 One Man
12.40 Sammartino	2.45 Mister
1.10 See More Business	3.15 PEATSWOOD (nap)
1.40 Chai-Yo	

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 2.15 ONE MAN.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 1.40 ALBEMINE (nap).

GOING: GOOD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.40 GOOD JOB NOVICES HURDLE

(£7,263; 2m) (13 runners)

101 1111-11 KILGASH 40 (D.F.S.) (Mr. J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... A. McGeary 80

102 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

103 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

104 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

105 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

106 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

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118 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

119 1212-12 DESERT GREEN 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 80

1.10 PEREMPS RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP FELTHAM

NOVICES CHASE (Grade 1: £22,950; 3m) (7 runners)
301 666-11 ARROWFOL 19 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... A. McGeary 87
302 453-11 BUCKHOUSE BOY 12 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87
303 1112-10 DUNDEE 21 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87
304 1012-11 FINE TIME 30 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87
305 1012-11 FINE TIME 30 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87
306 111-12 SEE MORE BUSINESS 25 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87
307 213-12 SOLDIERS DANCER 26 (D.F.S.) (Mrs J. Mould) M. Chivers 11-10-10 ... M. Williams 87

SETTING: 6-4 See More Business, 7-2 Arrowfol, 4-1 Fine Time, 7-1 Buckhouse Boy, 8-1 Dundee, 12-1 FINE TIME.

FORM FOCUS

ARROWFOL completed double, beat Major Sammartino (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

BUCKHOUSE BOY beat Pong Weng (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

DUNDEE beat Pong Weng (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

FINE TIME beat Pong Weng (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

SEE MORE BUSINESS beat Pong Weng (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

SOLDIERS DANCER beat Pong Weng (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

SETTING: 6-4 See More Business, 7-2 Arrowfol, 4-1 Fine Time, 7-1 Buckhouse Boy, 8-1 Dundee, 12-1 FINE TIME.

FORM FOCUS

THINKING TWICE 271 3rd and 6 to 2nd Call at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

CONCENTRY 101 4th and 10 to 1st at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

CHAMPION 101 4th and 10 to 1st at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

THINKING TWICE 271 3rd and 6 to 2nd Call at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

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CHAMPION 101 4th and 10 to 1st at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

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THINKING TWICE 271 3rd and 6 to 2nd Call at Kempton (11-0) (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £22,950, 14 m).

Former champion regains control of his career away from title-chasing treadmill



Dunwoody's desire for competition is undimmed despite his big-race victories and jockey's titles

Dunwoody's quest for success fuelled by driving ambition

It is hard to assess exactly where Richard Dunwoody is now. He is the term "champion" behind long ago and has ticked items off the list of greatness with absurd ease: the Grand National (West Tip and Minnehoma), the Gold Cup (Charter Party), the Champion Hurdle (Kribbenst), three times champion jockey. He rode his 1,400th winner earlier in the season, has the pick of the best horses on both sides of the Irish Sea and, at 32, the respect of all but a very few of that critical breed whose investment he carries every day of the week.

A new video of Dunwoody's career is subtitled *The Perfect Artiste*, which, even allowing for a bit of pre-Christmas hyperbole, is not far off the mark. In it, Graham Bradley offers this assessment: "Richard is phenomenal, dedicated, very hard to beat. He's about as good as I've seen... Francombe apart." Even Dunwoody accepts Francombe's pre-eminence.

Bradley calls Dunwoody "the professional" and just a short time in the Irishman's company justifies the description. Earlier this year, Dunwoody was lured by his new adventure to ride his A Snip in the Velka Pardubicka in the Czech Republic. No jockey this century had ridden the winner of the National and the Pardubicka, but for all Dunwoody's outward concern, this might have been a novice chase at Southwell.

He manifestly failed to be impressed by the mighty Thud fence "jumped bigger than that in Italy" — or to be wooed into making claims on behalf of his outrageous bravery by an interviewer from Czech television. He was unbothered by the complexity of the layout or the dubious quality of a game

ANDREW LONGMORE



on a National Hunt jockey at the height of his powers

but ageing chaser. What did worry him was the inexperience of the local riders, something out of his control. In the event, his historic quest failed, but for want of speed in its A Snip rather than lack of guidance from on top.

To look at Dunwoody on a horse, even with untrained eyes, is to see the ultimate in control. If there is a flurry of activity on board, it is either time to bail out — though Dunwoody falls more elegantly than most because he tends to see trouble coming — or to mount one of those rhythmic finishes that are the mark of the true stylist.

Otherwise, with head low against the neck, seat down, horse and man are moulded in near inseparable silhouette. Control is important to him, on horseback and in his life: it was at the root of his split from Martin Pipe. Stuck on a treadmill that was

playing havoc with his health and his private life, he had to jump off. The move away from Pipe and the endless pursuit of two-bit winners prompted tales of a new, mellow, Dunwoody. There is truth in the change, but only so much. In his second championship season, 1993-94, he had ridden 59 winners from 357 rides by early December; this year it was 68 from 329. "You should ask my agent about how much I've changed," he said. Or the motorists who have the temerity to block his path. Or his weighing-room colleagues who see the same intense expression and receive the same curt response to their questions during idle moments in a three-mile chase.

I'm obsessive now, but I'm trying to be obsessive about the right things," he said. Dunwoody has a degree in obsession. The difference from those turbulent days when he drove himself near to a nervous breakdown in his duel with Adrian Maguire is that he knows the source of his obsession. He is obsessed with competition, not race-riding.

If he needs a living reminder of the past, he has only to look across the weighing-room at the new champion, Tony McCoy. "At Leicester recently, I rode a horse Tony could have ridden," he said. "He finished down the field on his and I finished second, but he couldn't see where I was. So he comes rushing up to me: 'Did you win?' 'Yes,' I said, 'hacked up.' And he went off cursing. I could see myself right there."

Dunwoody admits that he has almost everything now: the best horses, the confidence, wealth enough, precious freedom inside an oppressive routine. Yet contentment is not a familiar state of mind.

There is always another challenge. He has hired R&B promotions to take his name wider, has his own ten-minute slot on Radio 5 Live on Friday nights and developed a strong friendship with David Coulthard, the Formula One driver.

Asked if he could walk away from racing tomorrow, Dunwoody said: "Definitely. I can look you in the eye and say that. I've got other ambitions outside racing. I want to get my racing driver's licence next year and set up my own business. I've got tentacles all over the place. They're just not reached out and grabbed hold of anything yet. So racing is still No 1 in my life."

For how much longer, though? Dunwoody nearly retired two years

ago and again last month. "I went up to Leicester and the meeting was called off and I said: 'Right, that's it. I've had enough,' he said. "Three days later, I'm at Folkestone and really looking forward to it. I'm very changeable, it's part of my character."

There is nothing in racing I particularly want to do now. My fulfilment comes from competing, riding decent horses and winning. I enjoy riding at Fakenham as much as Cheltenham or Aintree. I enjoy expressing myself because this is the one thing I do reasonably well. Yes, Dunwoody has changed. He is not just an incomprehensibly impressive jockey these days, he is an impressive man.

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
2.50 Cadez Le Passage 2.20 Passage Creeping
1.20 The Wyndcliffe Inn 2.50 Wallditch Beach
1.50 Effelence 3.20 Ceh Sho No

for Newmarket Correspondent: 9.20 Nothing Doing.

QING: STANDARD DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST SIS

12.50 EPIPHANY CLAIMING STAKES (Div 1: £2,541; 1m 20) (6 runners)

1 (1) 000155 CEREZ LE PASSAGE 12 (5) (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000288 HANOVERY MISS 6 (5) (M) W Ryan 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000003 HATTA SUNSHINE 30 (5) (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000000 HATTA SUNSHINE 30 (5) (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
5 (5) 000000 HATTA SUNSHINE 30 (5) (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
6 (6) 000000 HATTA SUNSHINE 30 (5) (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

ETTING: 6-4 Bonyon Valley, 5-1 Cadez Le Passage, 5-2 Ceh Sho No, 5-1 Hata Sunshine, 5-1 Hata Sunshine.

1996: NO CORRESPONDING MEETINGS

1.20 MARY & JOSEPH NURSERY HANDICAP

2-1-0: £2,846; 6f (7 runners)
1 (1) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
5 (5) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
6 (6) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

ETTING: 6-4 Bonyon Valley, 5-1 Cadez Le Passage, 5-2 Ceh Sho No, 5-1 Hata Sunshine, 5-1 Hata Sunshine.

1.50 THREE WISE MEN MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES

2-1-0: £2,846; 4f (4 runners)
1 (1) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

2.20 SANTA CLAUD MAIDEN STAKES (Div 1: £2,541; 1m 20) (9 runners)

1 (1) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
5 (5) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
6 (6) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
7 (7) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
8 (8) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
9 (9) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

ETTING: 6-4 Bonyon Valley, 5-1 Cadez Le Passage, 5-2 Ceh Sho No, 5-1 Hata Sunshine, 5-1 Hata Sunshine.

2.50 EPIPHANY CLAIMING STAKES (Div 1: £2,541; 1m 20) (10 runners)

1 (1) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
5 (5) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
6 (6) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
7 (7) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
8 (8) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
9 (9) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
10 (10) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

ETTING: 6-4 Bonyon Valley, 5-1 Cadez Le Passage, 5-2 Ceh Sho No, 5-1 Hata Sunshine, 5-1 Hata Sunshine.

3.20 REINDEER HANDICAP (Div 1: £2,541; 1m 20) (10 runners)

1 (1) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
2 (2) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
3 (3) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
4 (4) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
5 (5) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
6 (6) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
7 (7) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
8 (8) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
9 (9) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55
10 (10) 000040 ROYAL DUTCH 15 (M) A. Dunwoody 5-4-4 W Ryan 55

ETTING: 6-4 Bonyon Valley, 5-1 Cadez Le Passage, 5-2 Ceh Sho No, 5-1 Hata Sunshine, 5-1 Hata Sunshine.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Plcs	W %	JOCKEYS	Wins	Plcs	W %
A. Dunwoody	10	28	20	W Ryan	15	17	17.7
P. Gaze	11	22	17	D. Halliday	14	23	13.4
A. Gaze	4	23	17	S. Williams	12	10	11.3
J. Gaze	20	119	16	M. Williams	12	10	11.3
M. Gaze	9	61	14	A. Carr	28	37	10.4
N. Gaze	11	117	13	C. Morris	16	18	10.0
R. Gaze	17	133	12	C. Morris	14	14	10.0

TRAINERS' PREFERENCES

The following are trainers' preferred races for horses engaged at more than one racing day meetings: Hereford: 2.30 Smiley Face, Huntingdon: 12.30 Kempton: 2.45 Bonyon Valley, 2.50 Cadez Le Passage, 3.00 Ceh Sho No, 3.10 Hata Sunshine, 3.20 Hata Sunshine, 3.30 Hata Sunshine, 3.40 Hata Sunshine, 3.50 Hata Sunshine, 4.00 Hata Sunshine, 4.10 Hata Sunshine, 4.20 Hata Sunshine, 4.30 Hata Sunshine, 4.40 Hata Sunshine, 4.50 Hata Sunshine, 5.00 Hata Sunshine, 5.10 Hata Sunshine, 5.20 Hata Sunshine, 5.30 Hata Sunshine, 5.40 Hata Sunshine, 5.50 Hata Sunshine, 6.00 Hata Sunshine, 6.10 Hata Sunshine, 6.20 Hata Sunshine, 6.30 Hata Sunshine, 6.40 Hata Sunshine, 6.50 Hata Sunshine, 7.00 Hata Sunshine, 7.10 Hata Sunshine, 7.20 Hata Sunshine, 7.30 Hata Sunshine, 7.40 Hata Sunshine, 7.50 Hata Sunshine, 8.00 Hata Sunshine, 8.10 Hata Sunshine, 8.20 Hata Sunshine, 8.30 Hata Sunshine, 8.40 Hata Sunshine, 8.50 Hata Sunshine, 9.00 Hata Sunshine, 9.10 Hata Sunshine, 9.20 Hata Sunshine, 9.30 Hata Sunshine, 9.40 Hata Sunshine, 9.50 Hata Sunshine, 10.00 Hata Sunshine, 10.10 Hata Sunshine, 10.20 Hata Sunshine, 10.30 Hata Sunshine, 10.40 Hata Sunshine, 10.50 Hata Sunshine, 11.00 Hata Sunshine, 11.10 Hata Sunshine, 11.20 Hata Sunshine, 11.30 Hata Sunshine, 11.40 Hata Sunshine, 11.50 Hata Sunshine, 12.00 Hata Sunshine, 12.10 Hata Sunshine, 12.20 Hata Sunshine, 12.30 Hata Sunshine, 12.40 Hata Sunshine, 12.50 Hata Sunshine, 13.00 Hata Sunshine, 13.10 Hata Sunshine, 13.20 Hata Sunshine, 13.30 Hata Sunshine, 13.40 Hata Sunshine, 13.50 Hata Sunshine, 14.00 Hata Sunshine, 14.10 Hata Sunshine, 14.20 Hata Sunshine, 14.30 Hata Sunshine, 14.40 Hata Sunshine, 14.50 Hata Sunshine, 15.00 Hata Sunshine, 15.10 Hata Sunshine, 15.20 Hata Sunshine, 15.30 Hata Sunshine, 15.40 Hata Sunshine, 15.50 Hata Sunshine, 16.00 Hata Sunshine, 16.10 Hata Sunshine, 16.20 Hata Sunshine, 16.30 Hata Sunshine, 16.40 Hata Sunshine, 16.50 Hata Sunshine, 17.00 Hata Sunshine, 17.10 Hata Sunshine, 17.20 Hata Sunshine, 17.30 Hata Sunshine, 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RUGBY UNION: CARDIFF GIVEN SEMI-FINAL BOOST

Referees end dispute

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE final league Saturday of 1996 in Wales will go ahead after the resolution of the referees' pay dispute, which caused the postponement of most of the club programme last weekend. Cardiff, who play Brive in the Heineken Cup semi-finals on January 5, will now get the vital preparation that they need with a derby against Pontypridd.

However, the two-week dispute with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) has caused bitterness among the referees. "Nobody ever thought it would come down to a strike," Hugh Barfield, the secretary of the Welsh Society of Rugby Union Referees, said, "but nobody thought the WRU would so grossly mismanage and mishandle this dispute. There are still strong feelings among some of our people, although we have accepted the WRU's revised offer because we've had to put rugby first."

By holding out in an unified manner — only half a dozen cup matches were played last weekend, along with a handful of games in the lower divisions — the referees

have won a sliding pay scale that extends across the top five divisions. The WRU sought to offer payment only to officials operating in the first and second divisions. It has also conceded that pay should be backdated to August 31.

Referees handling first division matches will receive £125, reducing to £30 for the fourth and fifth divisions. The package will cost the union around £60,000 this season, and there could be a revision before next season, when the WRU hopes to have referees on contract.

"It was an embarrassing episode and, as committee chairman, I am more embarrassed than most," Terry Vaux, the chairman of the WRU referees' committee, said. "I take my share of the responsibility."

The pay award contrasts with the fees available in England, where first division referees earn £200 a match and those involved in fourth division matches earn £75.

Meanwhile, Welsh clubs face only intermittent league rugby over the next two months because of cup and international requirements, and therefore limited gate receipts.

The WRU has commissioned a report by Price Waterhouse into the financial affairs of all 12 first division clubs, and Stuart Gallacher, the chairman of Llanelli, has told his squad that their positions will have to be reviewed in the new year.

"At the moment we are able to pay the wages... but I wanted to keep the players abreast of what is going on," Gallacher, whose hopes of a £3 million agreement with a local business consortium fell through last month, said. "I'm doing my best to see the players are supported as much as possible."

David Robinson, who represented Eastern Counties on the Rugby Football Union (RFU) general committee from 1988 to 1995 and was the union's treasurer for eight months, had died, aged 64. He had been ill for several months yet continued to represent RFU interests with vigour, notably during the five nations' championship dispute earlier this year. "We shall miss his wise counsel and sense of humour," Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, said.



Moore watches from the touchline as Sale kick a last-minute penalty goal to beat Richmond

Club decides not to punish Moore after cup dismissal

RICHMOND will take no action after the dismissal of Brian Moore, the former England hooker, during their Pilkington Cup tie with Sale last Saturday (David Hands writes). The club has reviewed the incident, during which Moore was sent off for stamping on an opponent at a maul, and will await the decision of the Rugby Football Union's disciplinary panel.

Until that time, Moore remains free to play, but the recommended punishment for his offence is a 60-day suspension. "We looked at the video very closely," Vinny Coddington, the director of rugby at Richmond, said. "We think it was very harsh sending off, which probably cost us the match."

Chris White, the referee, did not consult his touch judge, but his attitude, in the week when referees have been given food for thought by the failure of the appeal in the Ben Smolton case, must be applauded, however much players of considerable international experience believe Moore's actions do not justify the dismissal.

AYR

THUNDERER
12.05 Stylish Interval, 12.55 Sparky Gayle, 1.25 Trap Dancer, 1.55 Mr Kintwit, 2.25 Island Chief, 2.55 Military Academy.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT
(INSPECTION 10AM TOMORROW)

12.25 PT W BRANDY SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (11.954: 2m) (8 runners)

1-10 STYLISH INTERVAL 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-11 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-12 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-13 DUBIOUS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
5-14 TITOTAD 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
6-15 GORILLAS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
7-16 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
8-17 MEGALOMANIA 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
9-18 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
10-19 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

12.55 GOOSE NOVICES CHASE (12.953: 2m) (7 runners)

1-11 SPARKY GAYLE 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-12 BOLD BOSS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-13 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-14 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
5-15 TITOTAD 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
6-16 GORILLAS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
7-17 MEGALOMANIA 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

1.25 EVENING TIMES NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (12.953: 2m) (13 runners)

1-11 SPARKY GAYLE 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-12 BOLD BOSS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-13 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-14 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
5-15 TITOTAD 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
6-16 GORILLAS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
7-17 MEGALOMANIA 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
8-18 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
9-19 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
10-20 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
11-21 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
12-22 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
13-23 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

1.55 WHISKY MAC HANDICAP HURDLE (12.953: 2m) (8 runners)

1-11 ARAGON 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-12 BOLD BOSS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-13 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-14 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
5-15 TITOTAD 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
6-16 GORILLAS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
7-17 MEGALOMANIA 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
8-18 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

2.25 FIELD AND LAWN HANDICAP CHASE (13.100: 3m) (4 runners)

1-11 ISLAND CHIEF 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-12 BOLD BOSS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-13 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-14 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

2.55 IVY NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (12.124: 2m) (20 runners)

1-11 ARAGON 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
2-12 BOLD BOSS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
3-13 TRENDING 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
4-14 NODDAR 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
5-15 TITOTAD 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
6-16 GORILLAS 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
7-17 MEGALOMANIA 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
8-18 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
9-19 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
10-20 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
11-21 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
12-22 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
13-23 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
14-24 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
15-25 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
16-26 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
17-27 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
18-28 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
19-29 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby
20-30 SCORPION 10 (J.P. M. Phipps) 4-10-10 P. Cobby

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: G. B. 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 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1378, 1379, 1380, 1381, 1382, 1383, 1384, 1385, 1386, 1387, 1388, 1389, 1390, 1391, 1392, 1393, 1394, 1395, 1396, 1397, 1398, 1399, 1400, 1401, 1402, 1403, 1404, 1405, 1406, 1407, 1408, 1409, 1410, 1411, 1412, 1413, 1414, 1415, 1416, 1417, 1418, 1419, 1420, 1421, 1422, 1423, 1424, 1425, 1426, 1427, 1428, 1429, 1430, 1431, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, 1437, 1438, 1439, 1440, 1441, 1442, 1443, 1444, 1445, 1446, 1447, 1448, 1449, 1450, 1451, 1452, 1453, 1454, 1455, 1456, 1457, 1458, 1459, 1460, 1461, 1462, 1463, 1464, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468, 1469, 1470, 1471, 1472, 1473, 1474, 1475, 1476, 1477, 1478, 1479, 14

John Goodbody tests your knowledge in the Quiz of the Sporting Year

The Mongolian circus is in town... but which footballers are flying high?

JANUARY

- Which former England cricketer was the guest of honour at a lunch given by the United Cricket Board of South Africa during the fifth Test at Newlands, Cape Town?
- A cricketer from which country had electrodes attached to his elbow to transmit three-dimensional pictures, to decide "once and for all" whether he threw the ball?
- Who won the France v England match in the five nations' championship in Paris?
- Which foreign footballer arrived in England to sign for Newcastle United but had to return to Italy because his work permit had not been finalised?
- Who won the men's singles title at the Australian Open tennis championships?
- The son of a famous television commentator announced that he was giving up his job to try to represent Britain at the Olympics (he succeeded). Who was his father?



A: Mike Tyson batters Frank Bruno into submission in March. In which round?

FEBRUARY

- Which swimmer claimed that his positive test for marijuana was the result of passive smoking?
- In which sport did Jackie MacGillivray, a self-confessed enthusiastic amateur, compete against international stars?
- In which sport did *High Fibre* and *Greasy Spoon* participate?
- Which British racecourse was the first to have a mechanical horse to enable jockeys to warm up?
- Which British athlete, running the last leg of a relay, was admonished for waving the baton at spectators and then allowing an opponent almost to catch up before accelerating again?
- Which two former Watford football players did Graham Taylor ask to run the team on his return as general manager at Vicarage Road?
- Who outraged Spaniards by comparing Sierra Nevada to Morocco, but still won two titles there during the Alpine world skiing championships?

MARCH

- Of which rugby player was it said: "He is a person who, in my eyes, has set an example, and people have followed him because of the high standards he has set."?
- There were only 28 runners declared for the Grand National.

This was the smallest number since which year: a. 1964; b. 1970; c. 1979?

- Which West Indies cricketer announced his retirement after their World Cup defeat against Kenya?
- In which athletics event did Kate Staples, Zodiac in *Gladiators*, set a British indoor record?
- Which Scottish rugby union player was knocked out by a punch in the Calcutta Cup match?
- Which two foreign footballers were granted new work permits after the Government changed its regulations?
- Which country knocked England out of the cricket World Cup?
- Who won the Coca-Cola Cup final at Wembley?

APRIL

- In the past 20 years, only one surname has appeared three times in *Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year*. Which?
- Which American football player, a member of the Chicago Bears Super Bowl-winning team of 1986, joined the London Monarchs?
- How many strokes was Greg Norman ahead of Nick Faldo before the last round of the Masters?
- Who was said by a Football Association official to look like a "tube of Retfreshers" because of the colours of the new England kit?
- Who won the men's race in the London Marathon for the third successive year?
- Who took six for 21, including four wickets in four balls, in his first appearance in the Benson and Hedges Cup?
- Which snooker player, who reached the semi-final of the world championship, was fined £20,000 for assaulting an official?

MAY

- Who said: "It will not help to have one manager on the training field and another watching from the touchline. The players would not know where to look."?
- Who pushed over the referee at the end of the Pilkington Cup final at Twickenham?
- Which runner, returning to competitive track athletics after 20 months, had to take Vicks VapoRub and Paracetamol to help to cure a cold?
- Who said: "You could have knocked me over with a feather when the chairman called me in and told me that I had been sacked."?
- In the cross-code matches between Bath and Wigan, which club scored more points at their own code?
- Which American basketball player retired again, 4½ years after first saying that he was quitting?
- Who avoided being given out leg-before on 15 occasions by throwing his bat towards silly point while padding away the ball?

JUNE

- Which unseeded Slovakian tennis player knocked Monica Seles out of the women's singles at Wimbledon?
- Who was the first female jockey to ride in the Derby?
- Who scored England's first goal in the European football championship finals?
- Who gave up her quest, in mid-Atlantic, to be the first woman to sail non-stop single-handed around the world?



THE TIMES presents the traditional festive challenge — the Quiz of the Sporting Year. Test your knowledge on the milestones and misfortunes that made 1996 such a year to remember, and you may be the sender of the first all-correct entry drawn — or, if necessary, the entrant with the most correct answers — will receive the award-winning whisky, produced at Muir of Ord, a village on the Black Isle. The six runners-up will receive *Visions of Tennis*, a celebration of the work of the Allsport photographic agency, the official agency of the Lawn Tennis Association. It includes the players, venues and personalities from around the world. *Visions of Tennis* is published by Quiller Press at £16.95.



Prize for the runners-up



B: Oliver Bierhoff wins Euro 96 for Germany. What was unique about his goal in the final?

JULY

- When Paul Gascoigne scored his goal against Scotland in the European championship, over which Scotland defender did he lob the ball?
- David Seaman saved a penalty from which Spanish player to give England an unassailable 4-2 lead in the penalty shoot-out in the quarter-final of the European championship?
- How many successful kicks did England and Germany convert before Gareth Southgate's miss in the penalty shoot-out in the European championship semi-final?

- Who won the Open golf championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes and what was his winning margin?
- Which club had an application for National Lottery money turned down partly because it refused to admit women as members?
- Who partnered Jonathan Stark in the mixed doubles championship at Wimbledon but lost in the quarter-finals?
- Which cricketer admitted that he bowled "absolute rubbish" as he took the first hat-trick of his career in the NatWest Trophy?
- Which cyclist accurately forecast in the Tour de France: "Unless I get sick or injured in a crash, I will win."?
- How many Olympic swimming gold medals did Michelle Smith win?
- Who injured her left ankle badly, but still completed a vault to help the United States to the Olympic women's gymnastics team gold medals and become a national sporting heroine?

- Which overseas footballer scored a hat-trick for his new club on his debut in the FA Carling Premiership?
- Which British Olympic hockey player said after her penalty was saved in the bronze-medal game: "I watched Gareth Southgate in Euro 96 and now I know exactly what he must have gone through?"
- What colour shoes did Michael Johnson wear while completing his 200 metres-400 metres double at the Olympics?
- Which Briton came fourth in an Olympic swimming event, was moved up to third place when the Russian bronze medal-winner was disqualified after a positive drugs test, but finally lost the medal when the Russian successfully appealed against his disqualification?
- Who said: "I had my 20 minutes in goal just like everyone else, but I said to someone that I'd played in goal for Newcastle when I was on trial, and I've never heard the last of it?"
- Who broke the world 4,000 metres pursuit record at the world cycling championships in Manchester?

- Against which country did England play, and win, their first match under the managership of Glenn Hoddle — a qualifying game for the 1998 World Cup — and what was the score?
- Which non-league football club, whose player-manager has been sent off 21 times in his 22-year career, signed a five-figure sponsorship deal as part of a £3 million promotional campaign for a soft drinks company?
- Which county won the AXA Equity and Law Sunday League, their first cricket honour for 14 years, and which county won the Britannic Assurance championship?
- Which jockey received a four-day ban for using his whip with "unreasonable force and frequency" after riding Shantou to victory in the St Leger?
- How many winners did jockey Frankie Dettori ride at Ascot in a performance unique on the British Turf?
- In which country was the opening game of the qualifying competition for the 1999 rugby union World Cup played?

- A 12-year-old schoolboy became the hero of the New York Yankees baseball team when his intervention from the stand prevented a fly ball from being caught. Which team was on the receiving end of his action?
- Who finished second to Damon Hill in the Japanese Grand Prix, the final race of the Formula One world championship?
- To which town did Yorkshire County Cricket Club plan to move its headquarters from Headingley, Leeds?
- Which country turned up two hours late for the scheduled kick-off against Scotland in a World Cup qualifying game after a dispute about the quality of the stadium floodlights?
- Which country did the golfers of the United States defeat in the final of the Dunhill Cup at St Andrews, and who won the World Match Play title for the third successive year?
- Which French-trained horse won the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe at Longchamp?
- Which Nationwide League third division football club had a training session with acrobats at a touring Mongolian circus?

Play title for the third successive year?

- Which country beat Wales 7-1 in a World Cup qualifying game, the principality's heaviest football defeat for 66 years, and where was the match played?
- Which jockey, on November 21, completed the quickest century of winners in a National Hunt racing season?
- A professional footballer with which club was found to have been positive for cocaine, cannabis and Ecstasy in the same urine sample?
- Who said about his return to competitive sport: "I'm coming back with more vigour than four years ago?"
- David Campese and Jonathan Davies were the same age when



C: Andre Agassi bows out of Wimbledon in June. Beaten by which tennis player?

they opposed "each other in the Wales versus Australia rugby international? How old were they?"

- Which Sheffield Wednesday player was banned from football worldwide while Fifa, the world governing body, investigated a claim that he had agreed to join two clubs at the same time?
- What seasonal item was Ed Giddins employed to sell during his 19-month ban from cricket for cocaine use?
- Which former Wimbledon singles champion did Tim Henman beat after receiving a late call-up to compete in the Compaq Grand Slam Cup in Munich?
- As Manchester United beat Rapid Vienna 2-0 to qualify from the European Cup Champions' League, who scored their opening goal?
- About which sport was a film, *Space Jam*, made, in which aliens come to earth to steal the powers of the leading players?
- Who replaced the injured Phil de Glanville as captain of the England rugby union team against Argentina?
- The son of which famous English sportsman decided he would concentrate on professional rugby union rather than county cricket?

HOW TO ENTER THE QUIZ OF THE SPORTING YEAR

FILL IN your answers on the entry form and send it, with your name, address and daytime telephone number, to: Quiz of the Sporting Year, Sports Department, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9ON to arrive by Friday January 10, 1997. The prize will go to the sender of the first all-correct entry — or, if necessary, the entrant with the most correct answers — drawn from those received by the closing date. The Sports Editor's decision is final and correspondence will not be entered into. The winners and solutions will be published on Tuesday, January 14, 1997. The competition is not open to employees of News International, their relatives or agents.

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Andrew Longmore continues a review by *Times* writers of 1996's sporting highlights

Indurain ascends to the ranks of mere mortals

Following the Tour de France is an acquired taste. It depends on whether your stomach can take hours of switch-back motorcycling and gallons of coffee that has the consistency of tar. It depends on whether you like to know where you will be sleeping at night or where you might be going the next day. It depends, in these Euro-sensitive times, on whether you like the French, because, for all the foreign domination of the race, it is still their celebration and little quarter is given to foreigners.

For the five years before the 1996 Tour, the organisers had been intent on devising a route that would release their national institution from the grip of the farmer's son from Pamplona, and every year Miguel Indurain had systematically destroyed their schemes and transformed their beloved *Grand Boucle* into a Sunday afternoon picnic in Paris.

Indurain had won the Tour for five successive years. Worse than that, he had won without fuss and the French claimed, without style. He had won the time trials and defended his lead in the mountains, always doing enough to cover his back, always leaving a little bit for tomorrow. For the French, it was heresy; and there was no end in sight.

Indurain was clear favourite to prove himself the greatest of all time when the 83rd Tour snaked off from the Dutch town of s'Herengobosch on a dismal morning in late June.

The consensus among the café pundits was that stage seven, the first Alpine stage, would provide the first real clue to the eventual outcome. It was 124 miles long and included three climbs totalling almost 20,000 feet, the last a brute up to the pretty ski resort of Les Arcs. "A bitch of a day," Phil Anderson, the Australian journalist who rode the Tour 13 times, said. Not so, it seemed, for Indurain as he shadowed the leaders up the final miles, his face set in its usual half-smile, his legs working like pistons.

Beneath the red-and-white banner five kilometres from the end, Indurain rode steadily alongside Alex Zülle while the pace-setter, Alito Garzemandia, dropped away, leaving the way open for Zülle, his team-mate, and Indurain to haul themselves to the summit.



In the press room above the finishing line, where journalists had gathered to watch the closing stages on a bank of television sets, the excited chatter dropped to a whisper. They sensed this was the first decisive moment of the Tour. Yet only slowly did it begin to dawn just how decisive.

The cameras panned back down the field to show Zülle, who had fallen back, then flicked to another familiar figure, pushing the pedals as if dragging a tank behind him. The commentator's voice rose to a frenzy of disbelief and triumph. "Indurain en difficulté, ooh, la, la."

'For the French, it was heresy; and there was no end in sight'

la, la... The press room fell silent. Rominger, Riis, Bertin, Olano and Ugrumov, men who had waited years for this moment, surged past. Indurain was dropped.

Outside, the crowds were being entertained by the usual nonsense that heralds the arrival of the Tour while keeping one eye on the road for the first sign of the leaders. Freed, on a Saturday, from my daily reporting chores, I joined the throng, clinging precariously to the hillside above the road, blissfully unaware of the drama unfolding two miles below.

In the distance, I could see the riders toiling up the last kilometre, but not clearly enough to distinguish colours or faces. A wave of cheering echoed up the mountain, sweeping the leader, Luc Leblanc, a Frenchman, on to the finish. He

ON BOXING DAY

Simon Barnes recalls how a man with golden shoes ran into history

soon emerged round the corner, elation overcoming exhaustion at the sight of the finish.

Nothing unusual, the sages thought. Leblanc was an erratic character, but a mountain goat on his day. He would not win the Tour. Seconds later, a gaggle of riders appeared. I could not see the blue-and-white vest of Indurain, just presumed it was there. Then Zülle passed, all alone. Then, as I was about to jump down from my perch, a hunched figure laboured round the bend. It looked like Indurain. But surely not this far down?

When I returned to the fervour of the press room, the full impact of the collapse hit home. It was a measure of Indurain's hold over the Tour that some still maintained it was all part of the champion's masterplan. Most sensed the ending of an era, just as they had when Merckx was left by Thevenet on the climb to Pra Loup in 1975 and Lemond broke in the Pyrenees in 1991.

Only later did we learn that Indurain had refused a drink from Zülle four kilometres from home, then taken one from his team car, incurring a 20-second penalty. Indurain lost a total of four minutes and 19 seconds that day. He never recovered. On July 17, the day after his 32nd birthday, he had to ride into his home town of Pamplona a beaten man. In cycling, dynasties change slowly but with awful clarity.

The absurd elation of the French, freed at last from Indurain's yoke, heightened the sadness of the fall. Unfortunately, their own champion, Laurent Jalabert, suffered even more than Indurain, losing 11 minutes. In Paris, two weeks later, the crown passed from a Spaniard to a Dane, Bjarne Riis. Indurain finished eleventh.

It will seem strange that in such a prodigious sporting year, the dominating theme should be defeat. But there was a lot of it about. Through the year, I have watched Greg Norman lose the Masters, England lose the European football championship, Lynn Simpson lose gold by the width of a thumbnail and Big Mig lose five years' worth of invincibility in ten seconds of weakness.

So little joy, so much anguish. The Great Summer of Sport indeed.



A man alone: Indurain, trailing in the wake of the leading riders, grimaces as he struggles towards the finish line at Les Arcs

SAILING: DISPUTE RAGES BETWEEN SKIPPER AND RACE DIRECTOR IN BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE

Donovan faces sack for rocking boat

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

TEMPERS are fraying in the BT Global Challenge as the fleet hobbles towards New Zealand. The past few days have seen a serious falling-out between Chay Blyth, the race director, and Adrian Donovan, the skipper of *Heath* *Insured II*, which some observers believe could lead to the first sacking of a skipper in this increasingly troubled race.

The dispute with Donovan, who is leading a crew for the second time after completing a circumnavigation in the British Steel Challenge four years

ago, reached its peak immediately after *Heath* became the sixth yacht to suffer a serious rig failure on Friday, which almost brought the mast down and has effectively put it out of contention for this leg.

For Donovan, this seemed to be the last straw. He is believed to have told his sponsors, the City Insurance firm, C.E. Heath, that he considered the race to be a "fiasco" when at least six of the 14 identical yachts had serious gear failure. He said that, unlike in the last race, when a rigging screw problem caused difficulties on seven yachts in the Southern Ocean, this time nobody seemed to have a clue

what was going wrong. Donovan went on to suggest that the racing should be stopped and positions awarded according to each yacht's time through a mid-leg waypoint, adding that all he could now do was not withdraw but simply "deliver" his boat to New Zealand.

Blyth was not pleased and, according to one observer, had decided to dismiss Donovan when he reaches Wellington. The men had what was described as a series of "spats" throughout Thursday and Friday of last week. Blyth, who was travelling to New Zealand yesterday, said that he would do nothing about Donovan without consulting him, the sponsor and the crew. He confined his comment to: "There is no doubt about his [Donovan's] seamanship, but perhaps there might be a distraction here and there."

The background to the row is the increasing dissatisfaction felt by C.E. Heath executives with Donovan's performance so far. The company wants its boat in the top half of the fleet and is believed to be disappointed with Donovan's attitude and his alleged failure to motivate his crew.

Another source said that, in contradiction to the official reports circulated through the

race press office, that talk of "high morale" on *Heath*, which is struggling along in last place, the opposite is in fact the case. The mood is very, very low; they've all realised what it means to be in the toughest yacht race and it's not been a good race," the source said.

The issue of Donovan's future is made all the more delicate by C.E. Heath's sponsorship of Samantha Brewster, who completed a single-handed circumnavigation earlier this year in a Challenge yacht and is Donovan's partner. She was in Rio during the first stopover and is expected to fly to Wellington for the second one.

The problems with *Heath* underline just how competitive this race has become and the importance for the paid skippers not just to get round the course but also to motivate their crews and do as well as possible.

Donovan is not the only one who has had difficulties. James Hatfield, on *Time & Tide*, has had the odd run-in with members of his crew, while rumours have circulated since the beginning of the race that Boris Webber's *Courtauld's International* is not a happy ship.



DISTANCE TO WELLINGTON: 1. Group 4 (8,000 miles), 2. Save the Children, 1,021, 3. Toshiba, 1,202, 4. Global Teamwork, 1,187, 5. Nucleon, 1,152, 6. Courtauld's Int'l, 1,202, 7. Peace to Planet, 1,212, 8. Nucleon Electric, 1,218, 9. Ocean Rover, 1,257, 10. Time & Tide, 1,439, 11. Ocean, 1,444, 12. Concept, 1,480, 13. Courtauld's International, 1,483, 14. Heath *Insured II*, 1,707

Plattner in repair race against time

By MALCOLM MCKEAG

AS THE 95 yachts in one of ocean racing's great classics — the Sydney to Hobart, which starts as is traditional on Boxing Day — make ready, the crew of the favourite, *Heath's Morning Glory*, is once again mustering building instead of practising. The maxi broke her mast off Sydney Heads in a practice session, the third time in four regattas that Plattner has seen his rig collapse.

At £180,000 a mast, racing at the leading edge in the biggest boats is proving even more expensive than Plattner, the German magnate, had expected. *Morning Glory* uses advanced carbon fibre masts which push the weight-strength trade-off to the edge.

More ounces of weight saved high aloft can be the equivalent to pounds saved on deck or in the hull. After winning the Cape to Rio race last year with an already advanced rig, Plattner commissioned a new spar. That collapsed in its first regatta, in Hawaii in August. The repaired mast broke again during the San Francisco Big Boat series in September. A new mast was built — and it is this spar that has broken.

According to the owner, it was the mast that failed this time rather than a rigging failure leading to mast collapse. *Morning Glory's* crew is hoping to rig the original mast, flown in from Auckland, in time for the start.

The 630-mile race, from Sydney down the New South Wales coast and across the gale-torn Bass Strait to Hobart, is one of the toughest. It has in the past been won by British yachts — notably Edward Heath while Prime Minister — but this year has attracted only two Britons: Richard Collard's *Lady Queso* and Patrick Broughton's *Grandee*.

RUGBY UNION

SRU pledges new impetus

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) yesterday revealed its plans to promote development of the game at all levels during the new year. Fred McLeod, the president of the SRU, said: "What we have achieved this year is to put in place the foundation for future success. The new year provides the opportunity for turning vision into reality."

The commitments are to greater international success, by ensuring that Scotland fully benefits from the introduction of professionalism at district level; to build strength in depth at club level through

the newly-announced Scottish Club Rugby Development Initiative; and to market the game in better ways to new audiences.

By adopting an overall approach that links together all aspects of the development and marketing of the game, the SRU claims that it is providing a fresh focus for rugby in Scotland — at the end of a year that has seen great change in northern hemisphere rugby.

"The three SRU commitments for 1997 and beyond provide an agenda to which all of Scottish rugby can sub-

scribe, as well as providing a co-ordinated approach to the challenges ahead," McLeod said.

The SRU believes that during this year it has made clear its commitment to the development of rugby. In making good that commitment, however, the SRU is insisting that Scottish rugby must also address its structural weaknesses. The changes will involve initiatives aimed at strengthening rugby both within clubs as well as in the wider community — and other fresh marketing and promotional activities.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 33

CALTOP

(c) An iron ball armed with four sharp prongs or spikes, placed like the angles of a tetrahedron, so that when thrown on the ground it has always one spike projecting upwards. Used to obstruct the advance of cavalry and cause sore feet to horses. Ultimately, perhaps, from Latin *calca*, to beat + *trappa* a pin or spur.

CROCKET

(b) One of the terminal buds or knobs on a stag's horn. From the Romance *crocus* a crook or bud. "You will discourse of the span and the pearls, of the antlers and the crockets."

CARCOON

(a) A clerk in India under the British Raj. From the Marathi *karkun* a clerk, Persian *kār-kun* operator, manager. *kār* = action, work business. "He laboured," says Duff, "as assiduously as any carcoon under his government."

COPIA

(b) Plenty, a plentiful supply, now usually an abbrev. of *copious verborum*, abundance of words, a copious vocabulary. From the Latin *copia* plenty. Addison, *Guardian*, 1713: "Since they [writers] have such a copia verborum, or plenty of words, it is pity they should not put it to some use."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Qxg8 Wins material, eg. 1... Qxg8; 2. Nxe7.

GIFT IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS: PRICES INCLUDE DELIVERY TO EU CUSTOMERS (REST OF THE WORLD ADD 10 PER ITEM). SEND SAE FOR FURTHER DETAILS. STERLING/US DOLLAR CHEQUE, EXCH. ONLY. SPECIAL OFFER: If off any three books purchased. TIMES CROSSWORDS Books 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100. TIMES COMPUTER CROSSWORDS by David Almond - Crosswords on Computer 15 deluxe format crossword puzzles including 1000s of words and optional HELP books. Includes: Times Crosswords (10 titles) - Quizzes (10 titles) - The Times Jumble Edition (10 titles) - The Times Two (10 titles) - The Times Jumble Edition (10 titles)

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BOXING DAY IN THE TIMES



TOP FORM

How good is One Man and how will he approach the King George VI Chase at Kempton Park? Richard Durnwoody, the three-time champion jockey who rides him, writes exclusively in *The Times*.

KNOWN FORM

Test your knowledge with the prize Jumbo Sports Crossword.

ALL THE FORM

A full guide to the Boxing Day football and racing programmes

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Plate	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather (Spm)	Last snow
ANDORRA						
Soldeu	15 140	fair	varied	fair	cloud	-3 22/12
						(Excellent plate conditions; wind-blown off plate)
AUSTRIA						
Kitzbühel	5 45	fair	poor	fair	cloud	2 20/12
						(Most upper runs OK; much-needed snow expected today)
Obertauern	40 140	good	varied	good	cloud	2 23/12
						(Fresh powder on firm base; more snow forecast)
Sell	15 60	fair	varied	poor	cloud	3 14/12
						(Reasonable piste skiing though odd bare patch)
St Anton	45 190	good	varied	fair	rain	3 23/12
						(Great skiing on fresh snow above 1,600 metres)
FRANCE						
Alpe d'Huez	80 180	good	heavy	good	cloud	5 19/12
						(Some low runs slushy; otherwise great skiing)
Meribel	100 180	good	varied	fair	cloud	8 20/12
						(Slight thaw below 2,000 metres; upper runs remain good)
La Plagne	100 200	good	fair	open	snow	4 23/12
						(Flattering powder on upper runs; heavier lower down)
Palme	80 230	fair	heavy	heavy	cloud	3 23/12
						(Fresh dusting above 2,000 metres though wet lower down)
Schweiger	80 210	good	heavy	fair	snow	5 23/12
						(Superb skiing on upper levels after fresh powder)
Val Thorens	180 240	good	crust	good	cloud	1 19/12
						(Best piste skiing above 2,200 metres; icier below)
ITALY						
Cervinia	110 240	good	varied	good	cloud	2 23/12
						(Excellent piste skiing after snowfall)
Switzerland						
Mürren	70 170	good	varied	fair	fair	1 21/12
						(Well-groomed pistes at all levels)
Verbier	60 230	good	fair	soft	cloud	0 23/12
						(Excellent piste skiing despite flat light)
Wengen	35 100	good	heavy	fair	cloud	5 14/12
						(Despite milder temperatures, good skiing continues)

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain

L = lower slopes; U = upper.



From left: Judi Dench and Michael Williams (R4, 2pm); Alastair Miles in *Faust* (C4, 3.15pm); computer-animated dinosaurs in Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* (BBC1, 6.30pm)

BBC 1

6.00am **JOE 90** (737564) 6.25 Christmas Time! (732699) 6.50 Playdays (204317) 7.10 Fremantle (743743) 7.25 The Littlest Pet Shop (555601) 8.20 Eek! The Cat (765810) 8.45 Sweet Valley High (912931) 9.05 The Mask (159229) 9.25 Santa Claus is Coming to Town (555399) 10.20 On Christmas Day in the Morning (408201)

11.30 **FILM: The Wizard of Oz** (1939) Classic musical, fantasy starring Judy Garland as Dorothy, a young girl whisked over the rainbow by a tornado into the magical land of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming and King Vidor (8451512)

1.00pm **NEWS** (7) (82884106)

1.10 **TOP OF THE POPS** (5655835)

2.10 **KEEPING UP APPEARANCES** Humphrey decides to build a dream kitchen in time for Christmas (7) (906800)

3.00 **THE QUEEN** (7) (8638125)

3.10 **NOEL'S CHRISTMAS PRESENTS** With special guests The Prime Minister, President Clinton, Anthony Newley and Chris de Burgh (7) (245448)

4.15 **BRAMBLY HEDGE** Enchanting animated tale about a family of fun-loving mice (7) (446767)

4.40 **NEWS** (7) and weather (4047545)

4.50 **ANIMAL HOSPITAL GOES WEST** Rolf Harris travels to America to meet animal stars of the big-screen (7) (1631038)

5.40 **AUNTIE'S ALL-NEW CHRISTMAS BLOOMERS** Tony Wogan presents another selection of old tales from the BBC archives (835128)

6.30 **FILM: Jurassic Park** (1993) Steven Spielberg's dinosaur blockbuster with Sam Neill, Richard Attenborough, Laura Dern and Jeff Goldblum as scientists caught up in a nightmare weekend at a theme park where the main attractions go on the rampage (7) (84999)

8.30 **EASTENDERS** Tempers flare at the Mitchell dinner table (7) (8274)

9.00 **ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES** The final episode in a three-part story which concludes on Sunday. Dai's application for a home improvement grant is rejected. With David Jason, Nicholas Lyndhurst and Buster Merryweather (7) (8093)

10.00 **THE VICAR OF DIBLEY** CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Dawn French as the woman of God who discovers the joys of Christmas goodwill when she agrees to attend three separate yuletide dinners (7) (706729)

10.45 **NEWS** (7) and weather (849380)

10.55 **THE MORECAME AND WISE CHRISTMAS SHOW** The 1970 edition, with Peter Cushing, William Franklyn, Edward Woodward and Eric Porter (7) (537388)

12.00 **FILM: The Revenge of the Pink Panther** (1976) Peter Sellers as the bumbling Inspector Clouseau, leading down drug-smugglers. Also with Herbert Ross, But Kewok and Dyan Cannon. Directed by Blake Edwards (7) (490591)

1.35pm **CHRISTMAS EPILOGUE** The Nativity as seen through the eyes of modern-day Christians (889926)

1.40 **FILM: Please Sir!** (1971) John Alderton as a teacher struggling to cope with disruptive inner-city pupils during a two-week stay at a country recreation centre. Also starring John Sanderson and Richard Davies. Directed by Mark Stuart (245955)

3.20 **WEATHER** (4191775)

BBC 2

6.45am **FILM: The Barmaids of Broadway** (1949, b/w) Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers teamed up to make for one last dance musical together. About a showbiz couple splitting up. Directed by Charles Walters (7895125)

8.30 **FILM: The Band Wagon** (1953) starring Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse. Musical about a film-star being persuaded to take a lead role in a new Broadway show. Directed by Vincent Minnelli (8891212)

10.20 **THE SIMPSONS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL** Homer needs to earn some extra cash (7) (8670477)

10.45 **THE SUNDAY SHOW** Highlights from the series introduced by Donna McPhail (408632)

11.15 **AFFAIRS TO REMEMBER** Members of the public recall their favourite moments from the silver screen (893835)

11.20 **BALLET Documentary-maker** Frederick Wiseman records the daily routine of the American Ballet Theatre as they prepare for a European tour. Includes footage of the late Michael Somes in rehearsal and choreographer Agnes de Mille as she tries to construct a new ballet (153312)

2.10pm **A YEAR IN FLIGHT** reviewed by Julian Tait (9000670)

3.00 **GOGS** Animation about a stone-age family (7) (8634767)

3.10 **FILM: Casablanca** (1942) starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. The classic story of love rediscovered and sacrificed again in a "gln joint" in North Africa. Directed by Michael Curtiz (7) (1923670)

4.50 **CHOIR OF THE YEAR** First of a four-part search for the Britain's top amateur choir from Buxton Opera House (3984670)

5.30 **THE QUEEN** (Singing and subtitles) (744467)

5.40 **TODAY'S THE DAY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL** Two teams of celebrities from classic comedy shows do battle in this festive edition of the nostalgic quiz on Christmas past. Hosted by Martin Lewis (217651)

6.20 **AN AUDIENCE WITH CHARLES DICKENS: A Christmas Carol** The second of two readings from the Dickens seasonal tale. Simon Callow re-enacts Christmas dinner with the Crutchie family (7) (812545)

6.40 **ARIODANTE** An English National Opera production from the London Coliseum conducted by Ivor Bolton and starring Ann Murray in the title role, Lesley Garrett and Joan Rodgers (8306729)

9.20 **BOOKMARK SPECIAL: Saint-Ex** A drama-documentary about Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, author of *The Little Prince*, with Bruno Ganz, Miranda Richardson and Janet McTeer (7) (835899)

11.00 **FILM: Gregory Glen Ross** (1992) starring Al Pacino, Jack Lemmon and Alec Baldwin. Dramatic adaptation of David Mamet's Pulitzer Prize-winning play about two real estate salesmen having to clinch a deal to stay employed. Directed by James Foley (7) (921629)

12.40pm **FILM: Play It Again, Sam** (1972) starring Woody Allen and Diane Keaton. Allen plays a film buff who is advised on how to streamline his chaotic love life by the ghost of Humphrey Bogart. Directed by Herbert Ross (1073152)

1.55 **WEATHER** (9056132)

BBC 3

6.00am **GMTV** (7536309)

9.25 **CARTOON TIME** (840835)

9.30 **AWAY IN A MANGER** (7) (59187)

10.30 **CHRISTMAS WITH THE ROYAL NAVY** Andrew Turner boards HMS Belfast for the first broadcast from a non-stop live party linking naval families around the world (7141816)

10.50 **PERCY THE PARK KEEPER** Animation (8679903)

11.20 **FILM: Alice in Wonderland** (1951) Disney's animated version of Lewis Carroll's classic tale (7) (1048800)

12.40 **NEWS** (7) and weather (90314816)

12.50 **CHRISTMAS WITH THE ROYAL NAVY** (3918390)

1.10 **FILM: The Man Upstairs** (1992) Reclusive spinster Katharine Hepburn discovers escaped convict Ryan O'Neal hiding in her attic. Directed by George Sheffer (8055477)

2.45 **CHRISTMAS WITH THE ROYAL NAVY** Andrew Turner hosts more live link-ups with naval families across the world (3089767)

3.00 **HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN** (7) (8621293)

3.10 **THE TREASURE SEEKERS** Family drama based on the novel by E Nesbit telling the story of five children and their widowed father who set out to make the money they need to keep a roof over their heads (7) (9495564)

5.10 **NEWS** (7) and weather (5896038)

5.10 **CHRISTMAS WITH THE ROYAL NAVY** (4/5) (5886274)

5.25 **FILM: Dennis** (1983) with Walter Matthau and Mason Gamble. The adventures of a little boy whose inability to stay out of trouble is matched only by his neighbour's anger at his mischief. Directed by Nick Castle (7) (7975498)

7.00 **CORONATION STREET** Vera is reunited with Jack after his spell in hospital (7) (5187)

7.30 **DES O'CONNOR'S CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS** Festive music and chat presented by Des O'Connor (7) (843941)

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8.55 **NEWS** (7) and weather (614816)

9.00 **CHRISTMAS HEARTBEAT** A white Christmas Christmas dinner with the Crutchie family (7) (812545)

10.00 **FILM: The Remains of the Day** (1993) Anthony Hopkins stars as a butler reflecting on the vagaries of life and lost love. Also starring Emma Thompson, James Fox and Hugh Grant. Directed by James Ivory (7) (264800)

12.30pm **FILM: DDA** (1988) with Dennis Quaid, Meg Ryan and Charlotte Rampling. A college professor awakes from a night on the town to discover he has been poisoned with a slow-acting toxin. In an attempt to find his own murderer he retraces steps but soon finds himself caught up in a labyrinth of deception and murder. Directed by Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel (297591)

2.15 **FILM: Everybody's All American** with Dennis Quaid, Jessica Lange and Timothy Hutton. Charting the intertwined lives of three friends from the mid-1950s to the present day. Directed by Taylor Hickford (8671259)

4.35 **FILM: Oliver Twist** (1978) Animation (3929249)

4.55 **CARTOON TIME** (7572317)

5.55 **NEWS** (1244065)

BBC 4

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For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday

SKY 1

6.00am **The Muppet Christmas Carol** (1991) 6.10 **How I Met My Mother** (1991) 6.20 **The Legend of Johnnie** (1991) 6.30 **Double Bill** (1991) 6.40 **Reptile** (1991) 6.50 **Star Trek: The Next Generation** (1991) 7.00 **The Simpsons** (1991) 7.10 **The Simpsons** (1991) 7.20 **Superman** (1991) 7.30 **Superman** (1991) 7.40 **Superman** (1991) 7.50 **Superman** (1991) 8.00 **Superman** (1991) 8.10 **Superman** (1991) 8.20 **Superman** (1991) 8.30 **Superman** (1991) 8.40 **Superman** (1991) 8.50 **Superman** (1991) 9.00 **Superman** (1991) 9.10 **Superman** (1991) 9.20 **Superman** (1991) 9.30 **Superman** (1991) 9.40 **Superman** (1991) 9.50 **Superman** (1991) 10.00 **Superman** (1991) 10.10 **Superman** (1991) 10.20 **Superman** (1991) 10.30 **Superman** (1991) 10.40 **Superman** (1991) 10.50 **Superman** (1991) 11.00 **Superman** (1991) 11.10 **Superman** (1991) 11.20 **Superman** (1991) 11.30 **Superman** (1991) 11.40 **Superman** (1991) 11.50 **Superman** (1991) 12.00 **Superman** (1991) 12.10 **Superman** (1991) 12.20 **Superman** (1991) 12.30 **Superman** (1991) 12.40 **Superman** (1991) 12.50 **Superman** (1991) 1.00 **Superman** (1991) 1.10 **Superman** (1991) 1.20 **Superman** (1991) 1.30 **Superman** (1991) 1.40 **Superman** (1991) 1.50 **Superman** (1991) 2.00 **Superman** (1991) 2.10 **Superman** (1991) 2.20 **Superman** (1991) 2.30 **Superman** (1991) 2.40 **Superman** (1991) 2.50 **Superman** (1991) 3.00 **Superman** (1991) 3.10 **Superman** (1991) 3.20 **Superman** (1991) 3.30 **Superman** (1991) 3.40 **Superman** (1991) 3.50 **Superman** (1991) 4.00 **Superman** (1991) 4.10 **Superman** (1991) 4.20 **Superman** (1991) 4.30 **Superman** (1991) 4.40 **Superman** (1991) 4.50 **Superman** (1991) 5.00 **Superman** (1991) 5.10 **Superman** (1991) 5.20 **Superman** (1991) 5.30 **Superman** (1991) 5.40 **Superman** (1991) 5.50 **Superman** (1991) 6.00 **Superman** (1991) 6.10 **Superman** (1991) 6.20 **Superman** (1991) 6.30 **Superman** (1991) 6.40 **Superman** (1991) 6.50 **Superman** (1991) 7.00 **Superman** (1991) 7.10 **Superman** (1991) 7.20 **Superman** (1991) 7.30 **Superman** (1991) 7.40 **Superman** (1991) 7.50 **Superman** (1991) 8.00 **Superman** (1991) 8.10 **Superman** (1991) 8.20 **Superman** (1991) 8.30 **Superman** (1991) 8.40 **Superman** (1991) 8.50 **Superman** (1991) 9.00 **Superman** (1991) 9.10 **Superman** (1991) 9.20 **Superman** (1991) 9.30 **Superman** (1991) 9.40 **Superman** (1991) 9.50 **Superman** (1991) 10.00 **Superman** (1991) 10.10 **Superman** (1991) 10.20 **Superman** (1991) 10.30 **Superman** (1991) 10.40 **Superman** (1991) 10.50 **Superman** (1991) 11.00 **Superman** (1991) 11.10 **Superman** (1991) 11.20 **Superman** (1991) 11.30 **Superman** (1991) 11.40 **Superman** (1991) 11.50 **Superman** (1991) 12.00 **Superman** (1991) 12.10 **Superman** (1991) 12.20 **Superman** (1991) 12.30 **Superman** (1991) 12.40 **Superman** (1991) 12.50 **Superman** (1991) 1.00 **Superman** (1991) 1.10 **Superman** (1991) 1.20 **Superman** (1991) 1.30 **Superman** (1991) 1.40 **Superman** (1991) 1.50 **Superman** (1991) 2.00 **Superman** (1991) 2.10 **Superman** (1991) 2.20 **Superman** (1991) 2.30 **Superman** (1991) 2.40 **Superman** (1991) 2.50 **Superman** (1991) 3.00 **Superman** (1991) 3.10 **Superman** (1991) 3.20 **Superman** (1991) 3.30 **Superman** (1991) 3.40 **Superman** (1991) 3.50 **Superman** (1991) 4.00 **Superman** (1991) 4.10 **Superman** (1991) 4.20 **Superman** (1991) 4.30 **Superman** (1991) 4.40 **Superman** (1991) 4.50 **Superman** (1991) 5.00 **Superman** (1991) 5.10 **Superman** (1991) 5.2



RACING 31

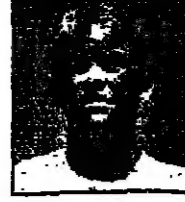
Dunwoody's quest for success fuelled by driving ambition

SPORT

TUESDAY DECEMBER 24 1996

CRICKET 35

Sussex exodus continues as Wells joins Kent



Lynagh conjures up cup treat

Leicester and Bath set for final rematch

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL LYNAGH, the former Australia captain, clearly has a future selecting numbers for the National Lottery. He was invited by the Rugby Football Union to make the draw yesterday for the sixth round of the Pilkington Cup and conjured up a round that will see the demise of a clutch of former finalists.

Lynagh, the world record points scorer in international rugby who is now playing stand-off half for Saracens, gave his employers the satisfaction of a home draw. He then promptly paired them with Wasps before going one better and pulling last May's finalists, Bath and Leicester, out of the bag: English rugby's big two are paired together for the seventh time in 11 years.

Next Lynagh produced three local derbies which should ensure full houses at Orrell — who play Sale — Northampton, who must hold off Coventry's aspirations, and Gloucester, who will meet their near-neighbours from Bristol. "I don't know whether my old friend, Bob Dwyer, will thank me for that," Lynagh said at Twickenham.

Dwyer, the former Australia coach, is now Leicester's director of coaching. Never mind Leicester, Lynagh's own colleagues might have hoped for better than to play the Wasps team that beat them so convincingly in the league last September when Lynagh himself suffered a dislocated shoulder that prevented him from playing for six weeks. "At least we will have them at home this time," he said. "Last time we played them we were still on a bit of a high after beating Leicester, but Wasps played extremely well, we were never in the game."

Since then Wasps, who have

played Saracens only once in the cup, have buzzed to second in the league table, where they have a game in hand on Leicester, the leaders. They have yet to experience the atmosphere at Enfield where, this weekend, Saracens will parade their latest signing, Francois Pienaar, the former South Africa captain, who yesterday paid his first visit to the North London ground.

Bath and Leicester have played in two of the past three finals and neither has been a great advertisement for the game. Last season Leicester were on the verge of victory before a controversial penalty try, converted by Jonathan Callard, sent them to a single-

they are successful, they will be forced to postpone the meeting with Bath because the European final, which takes precedence, is also scheduled for January 25. In that event, the Pilkington Cup game is likely to be played on the first available league weekend, February 8.

Gloucester and Bristol will rehearse their tie this weekend, when they meet in the league at Bristol. "There isn't much between the two sides in the league," Gareth Chilcott, Gloucester's commercial manager, said. "The great plus for Gloucester is that we have been slowly building our performances after a hard start, whereas Bristol have gone the other way."

The two West Country teams have managed to avoid each other in the cup since 1986, but it is six years since Gloucester last appeared in the final, and eight years for Bristol. Even so Gloucester's rebuilding, under Chilcott and Richard Hill, has not gone unnoticed and informal approaches are said to have been made to both men from their old playing haunts in Bath, whose management is somewhat unsettled.

"It will be a huge game and if Gloucester beat them in the league, Bristol are in crisis time," Chilcott said. "A cup run is very important, for finances and everything else, but the league is the priority. Gloucester are playing with a lot of confidence now and that could prove to be the difference between the two sides."

Harlequins, the 5-2 favourites with the bookmakers, will give Rotherham, sixth in the second division, a lucrative tie. The Yorkshire club have never been further than the fourth round.

Referees settle, page 32

Australia recall Langer and Hayden

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MATTHEW HAYDEN, the Queensland opener, and Justin Langer, the Western Australia left-hander, were recalled yesterday to the Australia cricket team for the third Test match against West Indies, in Melbourne, which starts on Boxing Day.

Hayden, who should make his second Test appearance, replaces the injured Matthew Elliott, while Langer, 26, returns after an absence of three years. Langer made an unbeaten 274 against South Australia in Perth on Sunday and has scored 598 runs this season at an average of 119.60. He takes over from Ricky Ponting, the young Tasmanian, who will instead play for Australia A against Pakistan in a one-day match on Saturday.

Steve Waugh, the all-rounder, has recovered from the groin strain that forced him to miss the second Test, in Sydney. He proved his fitness beyond doubt at the weekend with a match-saving, 9½-hour 186 not out for New South Wales against Queensland. One of those he denied was Michael Kasprovic, the young Queensland fast bowler, who was wicketless in his first two Tests and has been dropped.

Hayden, 25, played his only Test in South Africa, in March 1994, when he was called in at the last minute after Mark Taylor was taken ill. He has averaged more than 60 in Sheffield Shield matches. He scored 224 for an Australian XI against West Indies in Hobart last month.

Australia lead the five-Test series 2-0 and need only a draw in Melbourne to retain the Frank Worrell Trophy.



The Redskins played their final American Football match at RFK Stadium, Washington DC, on Sunday night, when they beat Dallas Cowboys 37-10. The Redskins are leaving their home of 35 years for a new 78,600-seat stadium five miles away in Landover, Maryland

Dalglish scouts around for nice sideline with Rangers

By KEVIN MCCARRA

WITH a terseness that the man himself must have admired, the signing of Kenny Dalglish was announced in a mere 117 words yesterday. The brevity of the press release confirming that he is to work for Carnegie Sports International, a company owned by David Murray, the Rangers chairman, contrasted with the lengthy conjecture that has surrounded Dalglish since he was removed from his position as director of football at Blackburn Rovers early this season.

It had been reported that the former Liverpool manager would be taking up a post with Rangers, whom he supported as a boy, to persuade leading footballers around the world to sign for the club. Now, the only reference to such a role is to be found in a sentence so heavily qualified as to be tentative.

After describing Dalglish's duties with Carnegie, the statement continues: "He will also, if required, from time to time assist in player recruitment for Walter Smith at



Dalglish: recruiting role

Rangers Football Club." A spokesman for Carnegie suggested that Dalglish, a former Celtic player, will not be integral to operations at Ibrox and may have to approach the club to propose transfers.

"If Rangers like what he offers and take what he offers, no doubt there will be some reimbursement to Carnegie," David Southern said. "The Murray International company all work autonomously." Of course, it would be

foolish to underestimate the quality of advice given by a man who ignored charges of profligacy when taking Alan Shearer to Blackburn Rovers for £3.3 million and eventually saw him sold to Newcastle United for £15 million.

Dalglish's title at Carnegie, however, is "New Business Development Manager" and, primarily, he is expected to attract sportsmen and sponsors to the marketing company. Carnegie also runs the Loch Lomond World International, an event of particular interest to a golfer as enthusiastic as Dalglish. It is likely that he will continue to live in Southport.

Meanwhile, Tommy Burns, the Celtic manager, has asked that Pierre van Hooijdonk set aside his contractual dispute with the club for the time being. "This was a big enough season already without obstacles being put in our way," Burns said. "Negotiations over pay rises and contracts should be left until the end of the season."

Williamson's job, page 37
Overseas view, page 37

County seek new direction on the Forest footpath

Dismissive attitudes are prevailing in Nottingham, according to Richard Hobson

MANAGERIAL upheaval is becoming commonplace in Nottingham. Four days after Frank Clark resigned as Forest manager, the general manager across the River Trent at Notts County, and Steve Thompson, the team manager, were dismissed after an emergency board meeting yesterday.

Derek Pavis, the County chairman, is a former vice-chairman of Forest and has kept a close eye on affairs at the City Ground. It is perhaps not surprising, given the elevation of Stuart Pearce to caretaker manager of Forest, that Pavis should have handed temporary responsibility to the mainstay of his side's defence.

Gary Strodger, 31, thus becomes caretaker-manager. He will be assisted by Tony Agana, a striker who became the club's record signing when he arrived from Sheffield United for £680,000 five years ago. They will hope to find the kind of instant success at Watford on Boxing Day that Pearce enjoyed on Saturday, when Forest beat Arsenal 2-1.

Five managers or management teams have been dismissed from Meadow Lane in the past 27 months, with Howard Kendall the most



Murphy: stability

conspicuous casualty, having lasted 79 days last year. When the chairman appointed Murphy and Thompson in June last year, he emphasised the importance of a period of stability at the club. Both signed three-year contracts but lasted just 18 months.

As recently as 1992, County were in the old first division and their ranks included Mark Draper, Tommy Johnson and Craig Short. They are now second from bottom of the Nationwide League second division and Pavis, upset at the growing calls for his own resignation, recently offered to sell the club for £3 million.

Geoff Davey, the County managing director, said: "There has to be a line drawn and a time when a decision is taken on whether to continue with the downward spiral and, as time passes, make it harder to reverse the situation, or clear the decks and give ourselves time to turn things around. This is a sad day but we must move on."

Arsenal protest about Wright's dismissal

ARSENAL have submitted an official complaint with the Football Association about the sending off of Ian Wright at Nottingham Forest on Saturday. Stephen Lodge, the referee, and John Holbrook, his assistant, will now be sent a video of the incident in which Wright barged into Nikola Jerkan, the Forest defender.

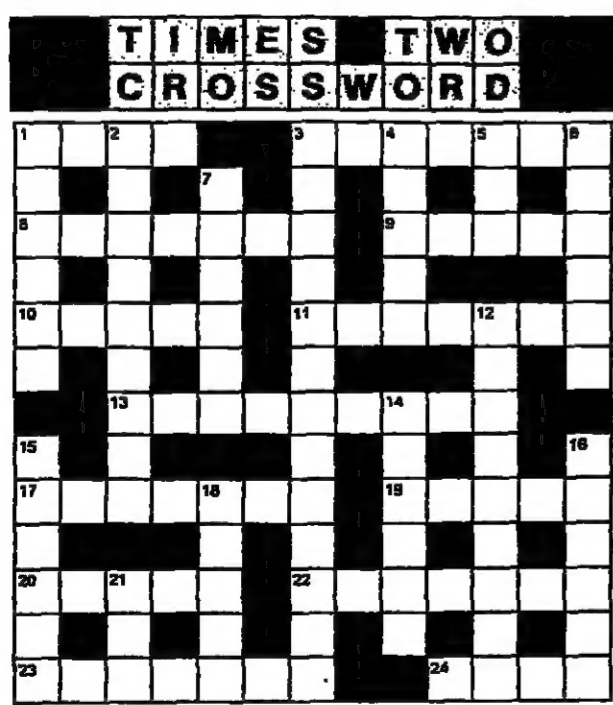
An FA spokeswoman said: "We will be asking for their observations before deciding what action to take." Lodge, who relied on evidence from Holbrook before showing the red card to Wright, confirmed that he had dismissed Wright for "violent conduct, which carries an automatic three-match ban."

"I am sending off my report

to the FA today and that has to remain confidential," he said. "I did not see the incident involving Wright, my assistant did. However, I would be prepared to view the video, provided that that request came from the FA."

Matthias Sammer, the Germany sweeper, has won the coveted Golden Ball award. The trophy is awarded by France Football magazine after a vote by football journalists throughout Europe.

Sammer finished just ahead of Ronaldo, the Brazil forward who plays for Barcelona. Alan Shearer, of Newcastle United and England, was well back in third place. Eric Cantona, the Manchester United captain, finished seventh.



No 973

- ACROSS**
- Rank above viscount (4)
 - Addition to will (7)
 - Half man/half horse (7)
 - In a while (5)
 - Major overhaul (of eg ship) (5)
 - Flar-bladed spoon (7)
 - 12 of stone-walling spokesman (12, 7)
 - Son of Polonius (Hamlet) (7)
 - Grey/white wader (5)
 - Stop! (nautical) (5)
 - Love affair; story of one (7)
 - A Creek (7)
 - Mark of blow; part of shoe (4)
- DOWN**
- Play it again! (6)
 - Project (budget) for specific use (4-5)
 - Decorated pine (9, 4)
 - Mouth of eg Nile (5)
 - Pet; whip (3)
 - Cowboys' tether (6)
 - Play (6)
 - Statement (9)
 - Disinter (6)
 - Chemical whitener (6)
 - Purpose; determined (6)
 - Tax of one-tenth (5)
 - Sicken (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 972

ACROSS: 1 Slab 3 Palliser 8 Not/able 10 Print 11 Uncalled-for 13 Au pair 15 Runway 17 Queue-jumper 20 Aware 21 Daylong 22 Latitude 23 Vein

DOWN: 1 Singular 2 Aztec 4 A level 5 Lap of luxury 6 Skid Row 7 Role 9 Belligerent 12 Hydrogen 14 Piquant 16 Banded 18 Prove 19 Maul

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 969

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ACROSS: 8 Execute 9 Owllet 10 Paperback 11 Bud 12 Rifle 14 Private 15 Marumit 17 Token 19 Lot 20 Sybaritic 22 Grove 23 Receive

DOWN: 1 Keeper 2 Heap 3 Quartermaster 4 Desamp 5 Fork-lift truck 6 All Black 7 Stodge 15 Function 15 Malign 16 Tabard 18 Nuclei 21 Twin

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